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CHRISTIANITY IN A CHANGING INDIA

An Introduction to the Study of Missions

BY

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To

AGNES, TOMMY AND MICHAEL

PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is two-fold. It is to provide a brief sketch of Christianity at work in India today and to stimulate thought upon some of the fundamental problems of the missionary enterprise. The author makes no claim to having solved these problems. He endeavours to present certain basic materials and then to present such questions as will help the reader to come to his own conclusions. His interest is not in promoting uniformity, but in encouraging thought. If the Christian Church is to influence the life of the Orient it must be engaged continually in the task of re-interpreting its function. If the following pages are of any help, I shall be glad.

C. M.

THE NAGPADA NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE,

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CHAPTER I.

WHAT ARE MISSIONS AIMING AT?

IN presenting some of the aims which have dominated mission work and which are dominating missionary activity today, it is not my purpose to give a complete statement of every possible aim which has influenced the course of missions, nor to attempt to secure agreement to any one aim. My purpose is rather to give a representative sampling of the drives behind missionary activity, and, if possible, contribute to the clarification of our thinking in this field.

From the very beginning Christianity has been a missionary religion. Jesus gathered about Himself the twelve, and the twelve attracted others. Whether or no the actual words of the Great Commission were uttered by Jesus, Christians fired by the example of their Master, have gone out into the world—teaching, preaching and baptizing. Although it is not established as an actual fact it is thrilling to imagine the practical Thomas, resolving his doubts, and introducing Christianity to the land of India.

Outside the circle of the immediate companions of Jesus we have the Apostle Paul, declaring Christ to be his supreme passion, and living as if he actually meant it. National bounds could not contain him : Jerusalem, Cyprus, Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia and finally Rome itself ! Distance,

persecution, dangers of the way meant nothing. Christ was all!

Yea, through life, death, through sorrow and
through sinning

He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed;
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning:
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

Paul's missionary method was that of extensive itineration. He went far and near preaching his gospel and attempting to organize the believers. Although Paul could lay claim to being a Roman citizen, he could offer no political inducements to prospective converts. He relied solely upon his message. He had every confidence that those who responded to his teaching would bear the word to others.

Contrast Paul with Xavier. From the day of his arrival in India when he went up and down the streets ringing a bell and calling the people to come and worship, until his death near the coast of China, Xavier was a flaming torch. To preach and baptize were his passion, but unlike Paul, Xavier was not averse to invoking the authority of Government to aid in the extension of Christ's Kingdom. At one time he even suggested that His Majesty, the King of Portugal, should demand reports from the Viceroy or the Governors "concerning the number and quality of those heathen who have been converted, and concerning the prospects of and means adopted for increasing the number of converts." Xavier's method of linking the missionary enterprise with the power of the State continued as the accepted mode of missionary work up to the close of the 16th Century.

Many missionaries since the time of Xavier have held it as their aim "to preach the Gospel."

Jesus said, "Go!" The "heathen" must *hear*. The responsibility for results rests squarely upon God. We read in the New Testament that Paul planted, Apollos watered, and God gave the increase. The missionaries of this type have planted, but they have failed to realize that the increase can come only after toil and careful watering. It is an unfair division of responsibility to leave it all to God.

A real forward step in the clarification of the aims of missions was made by the American Board Deputation to India in 1854-55. Although missions had been working in India for many years, the missionaries had been very slow to give and the Indian Christians very loath to accept responsibility. In practically every instance missionaries were pastors of churches and the churches depended for their support upon the missions. The deputation felt that the time had now come to work for the organization of more churches, ministered to by Indians and supported by Indians, or in Secretary Anderson's oft-quoted phrase, the time was at hand for the organization of a "self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating church."

An old story today. This was new doctrine in the 50's and attracted wide attention. The Rev. Henry Venn, a former secretary of the Church Missionary Society, expressed it in a classic form when he said: "The object of missions is the development of native churches with a view to their ultimate settlement upon a self-supporting, self-governing, and self-extending system. When this settlement has been effected the mission will have attained its euthanasia, and the missionary and all missionary agency can be transferred to the regions beyond."

Establishment of churches, however, too often came to be interpreted as the establishment of

denominational churches. Zeal for building up denominational statistics has at times surpassed zeal for building up the Church of Christ. This is not to be wondered at. The missionaries only carried to the mission field that which has been a most common characteristic of the church at home. At the present time there are working in India some 13 different kinds of Baptists, 22 groups of Anglicans, 4 branches of Congregationalists, 11 bodies of Lutherans, 8 Societies of Methodists, 24 kinds of Presbyterians, 58 unclassified missions such as the Salvation Army and the Hephzibah Faith Missionary Association, and 28 different societies with headquarters in India.¹

At the beginning of the Twentieth Century, Mr. Robert E. Speer defined the aim of missions as "to make Jesus Christ known to the world, with a view to the full salvation of men, and their gathering together into true and living churches in the fields to which we go."² "I had rather," said Mr. Speer, "plant one seed of the life of Christ under the crust of heathen life, than cover that whole crust over with the veneer of our social habits, or the vestiture of Western civilization." In Mr. Speer's judgment, missions might do many worthwhile things for the uplift of the nations, but their first and foremost duty is "to make Jesus Christ known to the world." Unless this aim is always kept central there is danger that methods may assume positions of such importance that they will crowd out the end.

Perhaps no expressed aim of missions has been so widely popularized as the watchword of the Student Volunteer Movement, *viz.*, "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation." This

¹ *Directory of Christian Missions*, 1928-29.

² *Missionary Principles and Practice*, p. 40.

slogan has been variously interpreted. Some have looked at it from a mathematical angle. Thus Hudson Taylor, the head of the China Inland Mission, estimated that in China a Christian worker could reach 50 families a day. Therefore, in 100 days, 1,000 workers could reach 50,000,000 families or the 250,000,000 of China. Allowing two years for language study, two months a year for rest, and setting apart the missionaries then in the field as a sort of emergency battalion, Mr. Taylor estimated that China could be evangelized in five years by 1,000 new missionary volunteers. And the same method applied in China might be extended to the world.

Others, less mathematically inclined, believed that the world could be called evangelized when *representatives* of the various countries had heard the Christian message. Still others believed that every individual must *hear* the message, but that the messenger had no responsibility for the results.

Mr. John R. Mott, writing in 1900,¹ defined 'the evangelization of the world in this generation' as "the preaching of the Gospel to those who are now living. To us who are responsible for preaching the Gospel it means in our life-time; to those to whom it is to be preached it means in their life-time."² The slogan "does not mean the conversion of the world within the generation. Our part consists in bringing the Gospel to bear on unsaved men. The results are with the men whom we would reach and with the Spirit of God."³ The church "has well within her control the power, the wealth and the learning of the world.

¹ *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation.*

² p. 6. ³ p. 7.

She is like a strong and well appointed army in the presence of the foe. The only thing she needs is the spirit of her Leader and a willingness to obey His summons to go forward. The victory may not be easy, but it is sure."¹

In 1902, Dr. Speer declared that the watchword was not a prediction that the world is to be evangelized within the generation, but a conviction that its evangelization is a perfectly possible thing.² Seventeen years later he recorded his conviction that too much emphasis has been placed upon "the world" and "this generation." The great aim and end is to evangelize. It is our duty to lay the "living Christ and His message upon the lives of men and upon the life of the world." We must strip ourselves from reliance in buildings, appropriations and material resources, "and be content to go out with Christ and His pure gospel as our one message, our one burden, our one reliance."³

Dr. James L. Barton, of the American Board, introduced a social note into statements of aim when he suggested that the aim of missions should include "the organization of a Redeemed Christian Society A religion that does not have direct and positive influence in the elevation of society in all its forms is of little value." It is a part of the work of the missionary to make the gospel regnant in men's daily relationships.⁴

Likewise the Reverend Bernard Lucas, from his rich experience as an Indian missionary, felt that Christian thought must be propagated in terms of life value. "The true aim of the Western Church is to give to India a deeper religious life, and not

¹ p. 131.

² *Missionary Principles and Practice*, p. 523.

³ *The Gospel and the New World*, chap. vii.

⁴ *The Unfinished Task*, p. 10.

what it may conceive to be more correct religious opinions."¹

The Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook, reporting in 1920, devoted a chapter to the Enlarged Outlook of Foreign Missions. In the Committee's opinion the challenge of foreign missions has hitherto been brought to us almost entirely in terms of individuals who are in need of a gospel of personal salvation. Now, however, the aim can be nothing less than the creation of a Christian society throughout the world. This involves certain emphases :—

1st.—Christianizing Nations.—The gospel must be so presented "as to reveal its power to guide, supplement, and bring to the highest fruition those elements in each civilization or country which promote the welfare of its own people and the richness of the world. . . . The 'Evangelization' of the world may be accomplished by increasing the number of missionaries. The Christianization of the world is a vastly greater task and cannot fully be achieved until the whole impact of the West upon the East has been permeated by the Christian Spirit."

2nd.—Nationalizing Christianity.—"The recognition of the legitimacy of proper nationalism and of the necessity of Christianizing it leads us to emphasize the importance of Christianity's developing in each land according to the native genius, for it is only as Christianity actually takes such a form that it will ever be able to permeate and control the national life."

3rd.—Christianizing Internationalism.—The breakdown of even the so-called Christian world because its international relations rested on

¹ Quoted by Speer, *Christianity and the Nations*, p. 106.

un-Christian principles presents a new occasion for proclaiming that the only foundations of the ordered life of the world are found in the Christian gospel—in the principles of liberty, democracy, justice, co-operation, service, and love.

4th.—The Internationalizing of Christianity.—In a day when men the world over are thinking in international terms, the Christian teacher cannot accept a national outlook as adequate. We must have a full appreciation of the universal character of Christianity. The Church must accept its world responsibility. “To be a Christian and to have the missionary spirit become synonymous.”¹

Speaking at the Foreign Missions Convention in Washington in 1925, Dr. Stanley Jones intrigued his hearers with the simple declaration that “The end of Christian missions . . . is not to propagate Western civilization around the world nor to project our ecclesiasticism throughout the world, but we are in a land frankly and without apology, openly and without the slightest hesitation to say that we think it is worthwhile to make men like Jesus Christ. . . . Jesus sums up the finest of the East and the finest of the West, and supplies a supreme motive for Christian missions. . . . If the motive and aim of Christian missions is to produce . . . Christ-like character, I have no apology for being a missionary.”²

In his book, *Whither Bound in Missions*, also published in 1925, Professor D. J. Fleming indicates the change in missionary thinking when he says that until the 19th Century “missionary effort was occupied with the geographical expansion of

¹ *The Missionary Outlook in the Light of the War*, chap. iv.

² *The Foreign Missions Convention, Washington, 1925*, pp. 52ff.

Christianity."¹ Now "it involves not merely geographical expansion, but the Christian permeation of all phases of life. Once the call was to unoccupied continents. Now the missionary call includes also great areas of life and thought which are as yet 'unoccupied' by the spirit of Christ. The modern missionary ideal is that His spirit shall permeate the whole of life—individual and social, national and inter-national. The 'unfinished task' can no longer be given merely in terms of Afghanistan and Tibet, but also in terms of un-Christianized habits, attitudes, and inward urges everywhere."²

"As we try to picture Christianity's most significant struggle we do not primarily think of Christ on one side with Buddha, Zoroaster and Confucius on the other. Rather do we see arrayed against the Christ stupendous social forces which are turning the world's life upside down, and which unless confronted by the united forces of Christ will ere long make the opposition of Confucius and Buddha seem insignificant indeed. In fact, in this greater struggle, Christianity generally finds itself the ally and the fulfiller of other faiths, rather than their enemy."³

"The essence of the missionary spirit is the desire to do good to all men as we have the opportunity, so that every form or type of service which ministers to man's well-being can on principle be included in the missionary movement."⁴

"The whole world is the mission field; and if a person serves at all he serves in the mission field. The significant difference is that the opportunities in some places are more strategic than at others,

¹ p. 119.

² *Ibid.*, p. 120.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

or the needs are greater, or the Christian communities are younger and less experienced or equipped.”¹

Mr. G. Sherwood Eddy, in addressing the Detroit Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement in 1928, almost duplicated the shift of missionary thinking in his striking portrayal of his own personal adjustments. More than forty years ago, as an adolescent, Mr. Eddy regarded the Christian message as a simple personal experience. Thirty-five years ago his horizon widened to take in a world of sinning and suffering men, each his brother for whom he felt responsible. With the war, religion came to be recognized as a social experience—an attempt “to Christianize the whole of life and all of its relationships.”

“Could we not,” Mr. Eddy asked his hearers, “with an audacity equal to the older generation that dared to attempt the evangelization of a world, have the courage and faith to dare, as members of a common family, to build a new social order the world around, not merely to evangelize, but in time to Christianize the whole of life in all its relations, whether economic, racial or international?

“Upon rational grounds does not the basic conception of the unity of the human race and the principle of love as in the full sharing of life imply the mutual privilege and obligation of the giving and receiving of whatever makes for the good life for all?”²

Perhaps the most authoritative recent expression of missionary aim was the pronouncement of the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

² *Report of Detroit Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement*, 1928, pp. 75ff. •

Council in 1928. The Council statement proclaims its message as Jesus Christ. "We are assured," says the Statement, "that Christ comes with an offer of life to men and to societies and to nations."¹

"We have a pattern in our minds as to what form that life should take. We believe in a Christ-like world. We know nothing better, we can be content with nothing less. We do not go to the nations called non-Christian because they are the worst of the world and they alone are in need—we go because they are a part of the world and share with us in the same human need—the need of redemption from ourselves and from sin, the need to have life complete and abundant and to be re-made after this pattern of Christ-likeness. We desire a world in which Christ will not be crucified, but where His spirit shall reign.

"We believe that men are made for Christ and cannot really live apart from Him. Our fathers were impressed with the horror that men should die without Christ—we share that horror; we are impressed also with the horror that men should live without Christ.

"Herein lies the Christian motive; it is simple. We cannot live without Christ and we cannot bear to think of men living without Him. We cannot be content to live in a world that is un-Christlike. . . .

"Since Christ is the motive, the end of Christian missions fits in with that motive. The end is nothing less than the production of Christ-like character in individuals and societies and nations through faith in and fellowship with Christ the living Saviour, and through corporate sharing of life in a divine society.

¹ *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, Vol. i, p. 485.

"Christ is our motive and Christ is our end. We must give nothing less, and we can give nothing more."¹

During the past few years an increasing number of Christian workers in the home-lands have been giving earnest thought to the basic assumptions of the missionary enterprise. A letter from a young minister living in one of the Western states of the United States expresses the feelings of many :

"Like a good many others," he says, "I feel somewhat at sea regarding missions. There are fundamental questions arising or already arisen about the missionary enterprise. I think the most fundamental question is this : 'Can we gain the support of the church for a sustained missionary programme not based on provincialism in theology or religious culture, but on the actual power of the Christian idea and spirit to incarnate itself in the varied forms of the life of the world, and in the sense of the worth of such an incarnation?' People have always been more zealous for the promotion of a specific form of religion than for the spiritual reality of religion in human life. In more general terms, the question is, and this applies to religion in our own land, 'Can a Christian theistic humanism command the heroic and faithful service of the church as did the old dogmatic, other-worldly Christianity?' And then there is the further question : 'Will such a religion so profoundly modify our method and the forms of our work that missions as we have known them will cease to exist?'"

The 121st Annual Meeting of the American Board (1930) attempted to deal with such questions as these and to present a message of encouragement

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 485-86.

to the Congregational Christian churches. A pamphlet entitled *The Five Hundred Words*, summarizes the situation, drawing attention to the fact "that no civilization yet attained is dominantly or truly Christian in all phases of its life." But since the world is a unity, "the struggle for ideals of human brotherhood and spiritual beauty must go on everywhere. . . . Ultimately . . . it must be a world of justice, love, goodwill and spiritual nobility everywhere or nowhere.

"Our motive, therefore, becomes 'the permeation of the world by the spirit of Christ,' beginning at home, wherever home may be, but inevitably going out even as go the radio and airplane to the uttermost parts of the earth."

The new motive carries with it a new approach to other peoples—the approach of sharing. "Our attitude toward other civilizations is not one of assumed superiority, but of sharing and co-operation—an open-minded and hearty appreciation of them and an eager welcoming of all the riches of truth and beauty they may bring to our total human heritage. At the same time, and by the same token, we feel that we have in our experience with Christ and His teachings something which, when our ancestors were remote barbarians, an older civilization sent to us to our blessing and which we, in turn, are under manifest obligation to share with all the world."

It is expected that "the religion of Jesus will. . . incarnate itself in personalities and in the intellectual and institutional forms congenial to each people to whom it comes The needs, conditions, and genius of each country must determine the methods to be used."

The message expresses full confidence that such a method of approach will appeal to the churches,

and that they will "go forward to serve the world with clearer vision, deeper consecration, and increased power."

No attempt has been made in this chapter to win the reader's support for any one aim of missions. The attempt has rather been to present a sampling of representative opinion. As we face the task of missions in the modern world what is our own attitude? Perhaps the following questions will be of some help in stimulating our thought.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Are all aims of equal worth?
2. How would you discriminate?
3. What gives any aim its authority?
4. What are the "strengths" and "weaknesses" of the aims discussed in this chapter?
5. Historically, what aim do you feel has been most worthwhile to the missionary enterprise?
6. Is there a danger in aims becoming words, divorced from life?

Thus we say—"To preach Christ"; "To make Christ-like character." What do we actually mean?

7. Are the aims of the missionary enterprise fundamentally different from the aims of the churches at home? What are the aims of the home churches?

8. Are the aims of the missionary enterprise to be distinguished from the aims of the churches in the lands in which missions are working? Is it a true statement that the responsibility of the national church begins where that of the missionary enterprise leaves off?

9. Professor John Dewey in *Democracy and Education*¹ says.—

(a) "The aim set up must be an outgrowth of existing conditions. It must be based upon a con-

¹ pp. 121ff.

sideration of what is already going on; upon the resources and difficulties of the situation."

(b) "An aim must . . . be flexible; it must be capable of alteration to meet circumstances."

An end imposed from without the process of action, is always rigid. It can only be insisted upon.

"The aim, in short, is experimental, and hence constantly growing as it is tested in action."

(c) An aim is not static, i.e., something to be attained and possessed. It has a leading-on quality.

Apply these criteria to the aims enumerated above.

10. How would you formulate aims for present-day missions?

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CHAPTER II.¹

WHAT ABOUT RELIGIOUS IMPERIALISM?

IN discussing the subject of Religious Imperialism, I am referring particularly to the historic missionary enterprise, based upon the assumption that Christianity is not only the best religion for those associated with the missionary enterprise, but also for the world at large, and that it is God's will that it should be extended throughout the world. Putting it very loosely and simply, I mean by religious imperialism the attitude of mind which says that that which I believe, should be believed by everyone else; and which is willing to undergo hardships and make sacrifices for the extension of that belief.

The administration of missions almost parallels the pattern of colonial government administration. Take the Government of India for example. In London there is the India Office and there is the Secretary of State for India. Then in India there are the Viceroy and his ministers, the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial and District administration. Compare that with the American Board. In Boston there are the Board offices, the Prudential Committee, and the Board Secretary for India. In India there is the mission organization—the chairman of the mission, the executive committee,

¹ The substance of this chapter formed the body of the third Alden-Tuthill Lecture delivered by the author in The Chicago Theological Seminary in January, 1932. The materials appeared in practically the same form as an article in the *Journal of Religion* for October, 1932.

the mission council, and the individual missionaries in charge of districts and units of work. Just as the British Government has been putting forth reform schemes in order to give Indians more share in government, so the various missions have been putting forth their devolution schemes in order to give more responsibility to the Indian Christians.

In the early days the district missionary held religious jurisdiction over his district with the same absolutism that the British Collector held sway over his civil district. The missionary stood alone. He had no Indian Christian associates to confer with. He alone made plans for extension and attempted to carry out these plans. When Christians began to come it was but natural that they should turn to the missionary for advice and counsel. The missionary was Christianity incarnate. He alone knew what Christianity was about, and as the bishop of the Christian community he ruled it. He was particularly concerned that the Christianity of his people should be the *true* Christianity, that is, the same type professed by the missionary, and he was alert to stifle any deviation from type.

As the Christian community increased in numbers and ability, the relationship of missionary and people underwent a change. Absolutism gave way to paternalism. The missionary was still at the top as the superior. He could still discipline the erring child, but the relationship between overseer and people became much more personal. The missionary father handed out advice and material gifts to his Indian children. As his Indian Christian family grew older they were able to be of considerable help to him in preaching and conducting schools. But the children had little share in the planning. The good Western father knew what was good for

his Indian children and he did not hesitate to tell them.

But the time comes in any family when an elder son will begin to question the absolute authority of the father. Arriving at maturity, he sees that the father's judgment is not infallible, and he claims the right to express his own opinions. And so it was in missions. As the Indian Christians became more mature they began to question the decisions of the missionary, and to insist upon the right of having a share in the planning. At first, the missionary found this difficult to understand. He urged the Christians to be good children and assured them that father knew best. But the children were stubborn. They began to cause trouble, and so mission work entered into the new era of shared planning.

But, though Indians and missionaries were now associated in council, the relationship was not one of equality. The missionary still occupied the top position as committee chairman, and generally made certain that his own opinions prevailed. Furthermore, there was always a missionary majority in the committee to doubly safeguard any possible chance of error.

This is more or less the position in which Indian missions find themselves today. Devolution is in process, but in the majority of cases there is still missionary control. There is, however, a growing movement in the direction of equality. In not a few mission areas no distinction remains between church and mission. The missionary still is there, but he works with, and under the direction of, the church. More and more individual missionaries are voluntarily stepping into the second place, while an increasing number of Indians are assuming positions of leadership.

But, though the imperialistic form of organization is passing, the imperialistic missionary message has undergone little change. Christianity went out to foreign lands to conquer, and today the spirit of conquest still remains. The idea may be expressed in varying terms, but underlying the missionary enterprise is its continuous basic assumption—the assumption of Christian conquest.

In the early days of missionary activity the attitude of Christianity was really warlike. It was firmly believed that Christianity was right, eternal and of God. All other religions were wrong, transitory, and if not of the devil, strongly conditioned in that direction. The attitude of the foreign missionary was the attitude of superiority, and his preaching was a message of condemnation. The dark spots in non-Christian religions were sought out and the light ones minimized. The best in Christianity was compared with the worst in the non-Christian religion. The missionary literature of the time was lurid reading. The non-Christian world was represented as lost, wallowing in the pit, and needing the saving grace of Christianity.

"In studying the non-Christian religions," said an outstanding missionary leader of the older generation, "one wants to think well of them, to see the best that is in them." But careful study brings one to "the inevitable conclusion that there is no best." They are but "broken lights", spiritually insufficient, filling "the heathen world with dreariness and pathos." The very thought of it "tinges one's life with sadness. And that sadness is quickened into indignation and pity at the recollection of the awful suffering and wrongs which are the products of these religions. . . . The missionary

is taking life to dead men." Christianity "is a life." The other religions are dead.¹

Many of us are appreciatively familiar with the writings of Professor Harnack. It is interesting to note in this connection, Harnack's objections to establishing a chair of Comparative Religion in Berlin. He is reported to have said : " (1) There is only one religion, which was revealed from God. Mohammedanism, Confucianism, Judaism, Brahmanism, and other so-called religions are the inventions of men. One has come down from heaven; the others are of the earth, earthly. One is a divine revelation from the creator of the universe, the others are moral philosophy. (2) The theological department of the university was established by the government to train men for the ministry. The Bible, the inspired word of God, is the only necessary text book. It contains enough of truth and knowledge to employ students during their lifetime, and it would be better for them to stick to it rather than waste their strength and time in the study of other creeds which can be of no use whatever to them. (3) If theologians or students have curiosity to know what has been taught by impostors and the inventors of false religions, they can do so in connection with the department of history or philosophy."²

Just a few years ago I received a letter from a missionary acquaintance in another section of India. In the course of the letter he said, "I was in a village this morning with my wife, a teacher and two boys. As soon as we drove into the village, people gathered from all sides and we soon had an audience of 125 people. . . . They were idolaters,

¹ Speer, R. E., *Missionary Principles and Practice*, pp. 22ff.

² Quoted by Speer, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-5.

not knowing the meaning of Christian terms such as Redemption, Atonement, God, Sin and Salvation. There they were with darkened minds and making no inquiry for light, and satisfied with their sinful ways. There is not a message on earth but the love of God as manifested in the life and death of his only Son for sinners that would touch those people. Nothing else would prick their dormant consciences and make them realize their guilt and their need of cleansing. You say that you 'believe that the Spirit of God can abide in men of any creed.' If that means that he could abide in the hearts of these people, or in the hearts of any village crowd or town crowd either, or in the priests of a temple, or in the hearts of Mohammedans, then I must differ with you. . . . None of the foreign and false religions can contribute anything to Christianity. Christianity as revealed in the Bible, as contained in Bible truth, is supreme and stands alone."

Though this letter represents a survival, it is typical of the viewpoint of the great mass of fundamentalist missionaries at work in India today. Despite the growing attempt to understand and appreciate other religions, a large proportion of the missionaries still regard Hinduism as the enemy, to be fought and conquered.

A steadily increasing number of missionaries, however, are feeling that nothing is to be gained by antagonizing Hindus, and so the more recent approach is that represented by Farquhar's *The Crown of Hinduism*. The genius of this approach is to emphasize the good points, rather than the evils in other religions, and then to set forth Christianity as the crown of the structure. This approach does not concentrate simply on the weaknesses of the non-Christian religions. It represents them as

containing elements of good, but Christianity alone is perfect.

Those responsible for planning the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council arranged for the presentation of a group of preliminary papers on the non-Christian religions. The writers of these papers were asked to deal especially with the values in the non-Christian systems. Dr. Mott tells us that "Shortly before the Jerusalem Conference delegates of some of the countries on the continent of Europe became solicitous lest this centering of attention on the consideration of the values of the non-Christian faiths, and a possible neglect to give sufficient thought to the absolute uniqueness of Christianity, might result in a dangerous syncretism. They accordingly requested an opportunity to meet with the officers of the International Missionary Council to consider the matter. The request was granted and a meeting of nearly all the Continental delegates with the officers was held in Cairo preceding the Jerusalem gathering." "The result was reassuring," says Dr. Mott, "and it was agreed that the grounds of concern on the part of the group should be presented at the Jerusalem meeting."¹

The Evangelistic section of the Jerusalem Conference had no easy task in attempting to reconcile the older and newer evangelistic approaches. But the Committee finally affirmed as the basis of its report an absolute conviction of the supremacy of the Christian gospel—a supremacy founded upon the uniqueness of Jesus Christ.

The approach of the Jerusalem Conference was much more sympathetic to the non-Christian religions than that of any preceding missionary

¹ *The Present-Day Summons*, p. 198.

conference of a similar nature. But though the *approach* to the non-Christian religions was different, the *net outcome* was the same. While Christianity appreciates the good in other religions, in somewhat the same fashion as the orthodox musical classicist appreciates some of the mechanics of jazz, Christianity can make no compromise. The approach of missions as conceived by Jerusalem, is still the approach of conquest.

There is growing up in many quarters at the present time a reaction against this method of procedure. Intelligent nationals are resenting the cultural and religious invasion of missions. They resent the subsidized attack of Christianity as it seeks to overthrow their own religions. Certain groups ground their resentment in nationalism, but others who see more clearly, attack the fundamental pre-suppositions of the missionary movement. They regard the missionary invasion as a survival of the old belief in revealed religion. The present-day view of religion as a natural process of development, gives little ground for any religion regarding itself as superior *per se*. Its superiority is not the result of divine sanction, but how it functions in every-day life.

And missionaries themselves are feeling the force of this position. As long as religion was regarded as something to be believed, it was perfectly natural to place the emphasis upon converts. If religion is an intellectual affair, it is quite proper that men should be taught to think right. And in the nature of the case, the right is generally the tenets of my own religion. My friend quoted above, who regards religion as belief in the crucified Jesus, is quite consistent in his endeavour to teach "the heathen" as he would call them, the meaning of "Redemption, Atonement, God, Sin and Salvation."

But when religion comes to be looked upon as man's search after the good life, the situation changes. For religions other than Christianity have engaged in this quest. Christianity now, instead of being a *right* to supplant a *wrong*, becomes a fellow seeker along with the other world religions.

The enemy is no longer Hinduism or Islam, but selfishness, greed, injustice—in fact everything which prevents man from realizing his highest possibilities. The primary missionary emphasis shifts from converts to co-operation.

To bring the matter to the fore in a concrete manner, let us take an example from India. In March of 1931, Mr. Gandhi was asked by a press correspondent about the future of missions under a Swaraj government. His reported answer was :—

If instead of confining themselves to humanitarian work and material service to the poor, they do proselytization by means of medical aid, education, etc., then I would certainly ask them to withdraw. Every nation's religion is as good as any other. Certainly India's religions are adequate for her people. We need no converting spiritually.

At once a great storm of missionary protest arose, to which protest Mr. Gandhi replied :—

I have given so many interviews that I cannot recall the time or the occasion or the context for the statement. All I can say is that it is a travesty of what I have always said and held. My views on foreign missions are no secret. I have more than once expounded them before missionary audiences. I am therefore unable to understand the fury over the distorted version of my views.

Let me retouch the statement as I should make it :—

If instead of confining themselves purely to humanitarian work such as education, medical services to the poor and the like, they would use these activities of theirs for the purpose of proselytizing, I would certainly like them to withdraw. Every nation considers its own faith to be as good as that of any other. Certainly the great faiths held by the people of India are adequate for her people. India stands in no need of conversion from one faith to another.

Let me amplify the bald statement. I hold that proselytizing under the cloak of humanitarian work, is to say the least, unhealthy. It is most certainly resented by the people here. Religion after all is a deeply personal matter, it touches the heart. Why should I change my religion because a doctor who professes Christianity as his religion has cured me of some disease, or why should the doctor expect or suggest such a change while I am under his influence? Is not medical relief its own reward and satisfaction? Or why should I whilst I am in a missionary educational institution have Christian teaching thrust upon me? In my opinion these practices are not uplifting and give rise to suspicion if not even secret hostility. The methods of conversion must be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. Faith is not imparted like secular subjects. It is given through the language of the heart. If a man has a living faith in him, it spreads its aroma like the rose its scent. Because of its invisibility, the extent of its influence is far wider than that of the visible beauty of the colour of the petals.

I am then not against conversion. But I am against the modern methods of it. Conversion nowadays has become a matter of business, like any other. I remember having read a missionary report saying how much it cost per head to con-

vert and then presenting a budget for the 'next harvest.'

Yes, I do maintain that India's great faiths are all-sufficing for her. Apart from Christianity and Judaism, Hinduism and its offshoots, Islam and Zoroastrianism are living faiths. No one faith is perfect. All faiths are equally dear to their respective votaries. What is wanted therefore, is living friendly contact among the followers of the great religions of the world and not a clash among them in the fruitless attempt on the part of each community to show the superiority of its faith over the rest. Through such friendly contact it will be possible for us all to rid our respective faiths of shortcomings and excesses.

It follows from what I have said above that India is in no need of conversion of the kind I have in mind. Conversion in the sense of self-purification, self-realization, is the crying need of the times. That, however, is not what is ever meant by proselytizing. To those who would convert India, might it not be said, 'Physician heel thyself?' ¹

In a later statement Mr. Gandhi said, "In India under Swaraj I have no doubt that foreign missionaries will be at liberty to do their proselytizing, as I would say, in the wrong way: but they would be expected to bear with those who, like me, may point out that in their opinion the way is wrong."²

It is not my intention here to discuss the rightness or the wrongness of the various propositions in Mr. Gandhi's statement. On the whole, however, it appears to me to be a reasonable statement of the case. Christianity has in time past been too much of a dividing force and too little of a co-operator. We have worked upon the assumption

¹ *Young India*, April 23, 1931.

² *Young India*, May 7, 1931.

that we alone carry the medicine that will cure the world's ills, and we have refused to call in the experts of the non-Christian religions for consultation. We have too often, and we must confess it in humility, chosen the wrong way of making Christian converts. We have offered inducements to men to accept our religion, and we have violated individual personalities. That which is done cannot be undone, but in the future we can be more truly Christian.

Religious imperialism divides the world up into geographic areas for religious conquest. Political imperialism talks about British possessions, French possessions and American possessions. Religious imperialism talks about Congregational Board areas, Presbyterian Board areas, and so on. The absurdity of attempted geographic occupation is evidenced very clearly in our own mission in India, where we claim to be working a territory 283 miles from East to West and 150 miles from North to South, with individual districts attempting to handle 1,000 square miles. Such geographic extension may cover territory, but the effectiveness of the occupation is another story.

The co-operative approach to missions pays little attention to geography. The areas to be made whole are those which prevent men from living life to the full, wherever they may be found. And the task is not a task for Christianity alone, the Christian has allies in all religions—wherever men are hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

I think I should make it clear at this point that the co-operative conception of missions does not look forward to religious syncretism. I believe with the Jerusalem Conference that in Jesus Christ the Christian religion does have a pearl of great price. I am content to call myself a Christian, but that

does not prevent me from receiving encouragement for daily living from the writings of, and association with, the prophets and humble followers of other faiths. One of my most treasured experiences of recent years was in sharing the evening prayers of Mahatma Gandhi, when but a few months ago we were sailing from Bombay to Europe.

As an American I live in India, and India makes its contribution to my life, but I am no less the American. As a Christian I also live in India and enjoy the constant fellowship of non-Christians, but I am no less the Christian. As I co-operate with men of other religions, we are certain to find points of disagreement, but the points of disagreement do not hinder us from working together at every possible point of contact. The co-operator does not place his emphasis upon winning men to his religion, but upon helping men to live the good life.

As a Christian the co-operator will offer freely to others, the treasures that he may find in Christianity. But in offering his treasure, the motive of the co-operator is wholly unselfish. He demands no formal acceptance of his religion in return. He is not interested in religious labels, but in reality. The changed life and the changed environment mean more to him than any possible change in name. His concern is not primarily in building up a Christian community, but in establishing the Kingdom of God, in its truest sense. While the co-operator is a foe of proselytization, he believes in the necessity of conversion. He believes with Mr. Gandhi that conversion in the sense of "self-purification" and "self-realization" is the "crying need of the times." But he does not believe that conversion in that sense, of necessity, involves a change of religion. On the other hand, he would not deny

a man the right of religious change. If a Hindu or Muslim actually feels in his own heart that he can only be true to his highest self by formally accepting the Christian religion, such an one should be gladly received. But to receive an earnest seeker is a far different proposition from directing the high powered batteries of Christian propaganda upon a man in an attempt to break down his resistance. Of such activity we will have no part.

And now, lest I be accused of dealing in abstractions, let me attempt to apply the co-operative theory to every-day missionary activity. Let us look for a moment at the set-up of what I believe is a typical evangelistic district. The missionary generally lives on the outskirts of some village, with a considerable portion of the Christian community living adjacent to the missionary residence. At the district centre there is generally a respectable church, a middle school for boarding pupils from the district, and a primary school for village children. In the numerous villages worked from the mission centre there are generally primary schools, situated outside the village walls in the outcaste section, and in some of the larger centres perhaps a church. The school teacher generally resides in the village in which he teaches, but each pastor is ordinarily responsible for a small group of villages.

The work of the pastors is for the most part exceedingly formal. They pray, preach and read the Bible. Their connection is almost wholly with the Christian community and the outcastes. They rarely see the inside of the village proper. They feel that the *summum bonum* of their work would be to convert the entire outcaste community. If this is accomplished, the village, from the average pastor's point of view, is Christian. He forgets the village proper which he has never even touched.

The school teacher goes through his daily motions in the school room. He goes through his daily Bible period as from a sense of duty, and then at the close of the day retires to his home to prepare his lessons for the next day.

The missionary, supposedly responsible for from 50 to 500 square miles of territory, finds time to visit the villages, depending upon their remoteness from the district centre, from one to four or five times a year.

Once a month at pay day, all of the district workers gather at the district centre to receive their money, and whatever inspiration and instruction the missionary may be able to give.

The result is a far-flung line of attempted Christian activity, but it is for the most part weak and lifeless. It bears but feeble witness to the mass of people without.

Contrast this with what it might be. Suppose the missionary should change his cry from a call to separateness to a call for co-operation. Suppose he should confer with the village leaders regarding felt village needs and should work with these leaders in an attempt to meet these needs. Would he be any less Christian? Which is more true to the spirit of Christianity—separateness, or the abundant life?

As I have pointed out in another connection¹ I should like to see experimentation with village social settlements. In selecting neighbourhoods in which to settle, the founders of the settlement movement generally chose those areas which were lacking in leadership because of the withdrawal of so many of the capable to more favoured sections of the city. Somewhat the same condition prevails in the Indian

¹ *The Social Settlement as an Educational Factor in India*, chap. x.

village today. An increasing number of the strong and educated are leaving the village for the city, with a resultant loss of leadership to the village. The extension of the settlement into the village would do much to bring about a richer and more wholesome village life. A few demonstration centres that really kindled the enthusiasm of the village people would set a fire burning throughout the whole of India.

Democracy in the secondary schools and colleges will undoubtedly mean a larger national staff and more attention being paid to the national culture. Truth is one, the world over, but no man can be said to be truly educated who is more familiar with the culture of England and America than with his own national heritage. A mission college which is a little bit of Scotland, or England or America dropped down into India, is not meeting the needs of present-day India.

The Editor of the *Indian Social Reformer*, in commenting upon the Report of the Commission on Christian Higher Education in India, says :—

The figures show that the Christian colleges in this country depend both as regards finance and scholars on non-Christian sources—the Government grants being paid out of the taxes collected from a population hardly 5 per cent. of whom profess the Christian religion. The Government grants, even according to the figures supplied to the Commission, amount to double the Home grants, and the bulk of the fees, of course, are paid by non-Christian students. We cannot help feeling in perusing this Report that the Lindsay Commission have not sufficiently considered the bearing of these statistics on the problems which they are considering. It may be hoped that in a self-governing India, the duty of providing national education in all its branches will be

adequately discharged by the State. The heavy subsidies paid to Foreign Missions, whose avowed aim is to subvert the Indian religions, will not be accepted as a legitimate use of public funds either in Great Britain or in the United States. The future Indian Finance Minister, not tied down to Whitehall, may take the same view of his responsibility. He will not share the apprehension of the Lindsay Commission regarding a successful renaissance movement in Hinduism and Islam. The central recommendation of the Commission, that the colleges should appeal for additional funds to the Home countries, apart from its incongruity with present economic and religious conditions in those countries, is calculated to hinder the assimilation of these colleges with the national system through which alone they can continue to serve the intellectual and spiritual interests of the Indian people. The days when an educational army of occupation was acquiesced in, are fast passing beyond recall.¹

If the primary function of the Christian college in India is preparation for the gospel, there is considerable point to Mr. Natarajan's criticism. Non-Christian taxpayers then have the right to protest against Government subsidies to Christian colleges. If, on the other hand, the function of the Christian college is an educational one, but an education in an atmosphere lavish with personal influence, the force of the criticism is lessened.

The educational imperialist sees knowledge as something to be imparted. The teacher has the knowledge and he hands it down to his students. Nowhere is the futility of this process witnessed more than in the Bible classes of the Christian high schools and colleges. The students are taught the scriptures, but how little they really understand

¹ I.S.R., November 7, 1931.

them. The Christian teaching is handed down; but how little effect it has upon actual life. The educational democrat regards learning as a sharing of experience, as a give-and-take process between pupil and teacher. Applied to the work of the Christian college, the democratic theory would certainly mean among other things, that the religious teaching of the college could be done most effectively by the religious living of the college. The student who actually felt the power of Christian living would seek out the source of that living for himself, and having approached it as a seeker, his response to it would be a vital one. Whether or not this student would become a professing Christian is beside the point, the thing which interests us more is the change in his every-day attitudes. Every man who throws his weight upon the side of idealism, as opposed to a deadening materialism, is our ally, and should be joyously welcomed as such. The Christian college as an educational and religious fellowship, as opposed to a mere teaching body, has possibilities which as yet have been scarcely touched.

A very simple concrete illustration of the co-operative principle in action is the work of our own Nagpada Neighbourhood House in Bombay, which will be outlined in Chapter VI.

Missions as a whole have placed too much stress upon planting institutions and too little stress upon personal influence. The time of the average missionary is so taken up with administrative duties that he has very little opportunity to give the people a share of himself. In the missionary enterprise of the future I see fewer institutions and smaller budgets, but a much more lavish giving of personal influence. There will be fewer missionaries, but those who are fortunate enough to be sent to foreign countries will be superior people. They will be men

and women who have a definite contribution to make to the land to which they may be sent. Men of established position in Europe and America will be loaned to other countries to assist in specific pieces of work. And leaders from other lands will come to America and Europe, that the work of missions may be truly reciprocal. There will be fewer missionaries tied down to institutions and more with roving commissions, to co-operate in doing good here and there as they may have the opportunity.

I do not believe that the day of missionary institutions is passed. A certain number will have to be maintained and even strengthened. Some of the more important work will have to be subsidized generously or endowed, that it may meet its opportunities. But the missionary line as a whole will be shortened. There will be less refrigeration—keeping in cold storage that which has been handed down by tradition—and more demonstration centres—hot spots and power houses. The missionary enterprise will find its place *in* the current of national life, and not apart from it. It will work *with* idealists of other lands, and not against them. It will rejoice in seeing the extension of what we call the Kingdom of God, rather than that of any church or mission. Missions will be a joyous, self-forgetful adventure—losing their life, and then finding to their astonishment that they have gained it.

Religious imperialism has had its day. The future lies with the co-operator.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the distinction between proselytism and evangelism?
2. Are missionary education, medicine and social work ends in themselves, or are they means to a further end?

3. Is there a danger in Christianity becoming "too-friendly" with non-Christian religions?
4. Which presents the greater challenge to Christianity: non-Christian religions or secularism?
5. Is Christianity adequate to meet the challenge of secularism in "non-Christian" countries?
6. What has been the effect upon the missionary enterprise of the study of comparative religions?
7. Could missions be justified on humanitarian grounds if they should abandon attempts at direct conversion?
8. Are missions responsible for the evangelization of any country? What is the responsibility of the national church?
9. Which method of work appears to be the most practicable—geographic extension or the intensive cultivation of demonstration centres and power houses?
10. Are the evangelistic methods now in use adequate?
11. Should missionaries engage in controversy regarding the relative worth of Christianity and non-Christian religions?
12. Should any inducement be offered to tempt non-Christians to become Christians?
13. Under what circumstances should a seeker be accepted for Christian baptism?
14. Should children in mission boarding schools be encouraged to make Christian decisions?
15. Should secret conversions be encouraged?
16. What changes if any, would you suggest in the missionary education programme of the home churches?

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CHAPTER III¹

WHAT IS THIS DEVOLUTION?

In the preceding chapter I traced in a sketchy manner the decline of missionary authority and the rising importance of the developing Christian community. This transfer of responsibilities and power from foreign missions to national organizations is known in missionary literature as "devolution."

In any mission set-up there are at least two factors. On one side stands the mission—a strong body, long organized, deeply entrenched, manned by Western personnel and supported by Western funds. On the other side stands the young church, growing in numbers, becoming more efficient in organization, and with an increasing sense of corporate life. Between these two bodies there may be the closest harmony, or there may be friction and maladjustment.

The general process of devolution may be pictured somewhat as follows :

First Stage:

Missionary here.	(Missionary rule.)
Converts here.	

¹ For the basic materials in this chapter I am indebted in considerable measure to a *Memorandum on Devolution*, prepared by Mr. P. O. Philip and published by the Scottish Mission Press, Poona.

Because devolution schemes are being changed constantly to meet new conditions, it is certain that some of the schemes here cited have been modified in one way or another during the period elapsing between the preparation of the manuscript and its publication. This, however, does not lessen the study value of the materials presented.

Second Stage:

Missionary here. (Missionary rule, with some advice from converts.)
Converts here.

Third Stage: Individual converts organized into churches—

Mission here. (Church dominated by Mission.)
Church here.

Fourth Stage:

Church equals Mission. (Mission and church nominally equal, with certain joint functions.)

Fifth Stage:

Church. (Mission merged into the Church.)

There are operative in India today at least four general schemes of devolution :

- (1) Those which seek to merge the church and the mission.
- (2) Those by which joint committees of the church and mission are responsible for work.
- (3) Those which recognize no distinction between church and mission.
- (4) Those which recognize church and mission as distinct, but co-operating entities.

1. *Attempts to merge church and mission :*

(a) *The American Arcot Mission*, representing the Reformed Church in America, has been a leader in devolving administrative responsibility upon the Indian Church. In 1910, the Indian Church Board was formed, composed of the male members of the mission, Indian ministers, and lay representatives of the institutions and churches. This board was entrusted with the evangelistic work of the mission, with the care of the churches, and with the management of the primary schools. The Board controlled all funds related to these departments and submitted an annual report to the mission. Though the scheme was of definite help to the evangelistic work

of the mission, a ten-year trial period led to the conclusion that it was perpetuating a dualism between church and mission, which was not for the best interests of the church.

Accordingly in 1922, plans were drawn up for a new organization to be known as the Arcot Assembly, in which Indians and missionaries working together through the Indian church would control the various departments of work. The Assembly constitution was approved by the Home Board in 1923.

By the terms of the constitution all local institutions, such as boarding schools, hospitals and the like are managed by local boards containing representatives of the school or institution and other Indian and foreign members elected by the institution or nominated by the Assembly. The local boards, which have an Indian majority, deal with the varied matters of local policy.

Above the local boards are the general boards for education, medicine, etc., made up of about an equal number of Indians and Europeans. Each institution of the Assembly must furnish reports of its work to the general board under which it may be functioning. The boards meet semi-annually, and are the media by which recommendations from local institutions are presented to the General Assembly. The general boards must pass all institutional budgets before they are submitted to the Assembly for final approval.

The Arcot Assembly is made up of about 100 members, approximately half of whom are Indian and half European. The Assembly meets annually and is the body of final decision, subject to the confirmation of the Home Board. It considers all matters of mission work and policy save those connected with missionary salaries and property.

Devolution in the American Arcot Mission may be pictured somewhat as follows :

SCHEME OF 1910

Indian Church Board: responsible to Mission :

Male members of mission

Indian ministers

Representative lay Indians

Entrusted with :

Evangelistic work, church administration, primary schools.

Entrusted with :

Higher education and institutions.

SCHEME OF 1922

Arcot Assembly : 100 members, $\frac{1}{2}$ Indian, $\frac{1}{2}$ European. Body of final decision which communicates with Home Board.

"Reserved" subjects: Missionary salaries, allowances, property, appointment of missionaries.

General Boards : dealing with education, medical work, industrial work, women's work. European and Indian membership equal. Each separate institution must report to the board under which it functions. All institutional budgets must be passed by General Board before going to the Assembly for final approval.

Hospitals, boarding schools, college, industrial institutions managed by local boards with Indian majority. Boards deal with matters of local policy.

Though the Arcot scheme has been working well in general, certain criticisms have been expressed :

(1) It is felt by many that the appointment and stationing of missionaries should be in the hands of the Assembly.

(2) Personal matters, such as salary scales for Indian workers, are discussed in the Assembly where many interested parties are present. It is claimed that too much time is given to the discussion of these personal matters.

(3) It is felt by various members that while the Assembly has a function as an educative body, it is too large to further useful discussion as a deliberative body.

(4) Certain individuals feel that a more representative Indian opinion might be obtained if the Assembly discussions were conducted in the vernacular rather than English. The use of English places the Indian members at a disadvantage in debate.¹

(b) As a result of the World War, compelling the withdrawal of German missionaries from India, the *Gossner Mission of Chota Nagpur* became almost entirely merged in the *Evangelical Lutheran Autonomous Church*. For many years the Gossner Mission had been doing good work, until in 1914, its baptized members numbered about 100,000. When the missionaries were repatriated in 1915, the mission work was entrusted to the care of the Anglican Bishop of Chota Nagpur. Though the work was well administered, the desire grew among the people for forming an independent church of their own, and July, 1919, witnessed the birth of the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Autonomous Church in Chota Nagpur and Assam. All of the

¹ *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, Vol. iii, "The Relations between the Younger and Older Churches," pp. 103-06.

leaders of the church are Indian. To assist the new church, the National Christian Council supplied an advisory board to administer the institutional work of the church. This board functioned until February, 1928, when its duties and responsibilities were taken over by the Church Council.

Although several German missionaries have returned to the Gossner field, the constitution of the church remains unchanged. The church makes formal application to the Home Board for the kind of missionaries it desires. Arriving in India, the missionary becomes a member of the church, and may be elected to membership in the church council. The council gives the missionary his work and supervises it. The Berlin Board pays missionary salaries and determines furloughs. The church may ask the Board to withdraw any missionary who is found to be unsatisfactory.

Theoretically, the church and mission are one. Practically, however, the missionaries are said to assume too much responsibility and not to encourage the spirit of independence within the church.¹

GOSSNER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH •

- (1) Pre-war : Mission here.
Church here.
- (2) 1919-28: Independent church, assisted by an advisory board of the National Christian Council.
- (3) 1928- : Church and mission merged. •

(c) Until 1911, the Mission Conference of the *Danish Mission in South India*, ran both the mission and the church. In 1911 the church and mission were separated. The church was given a constitution and entrusted with all congregational

¹ Philip, P. O., *Memorandum on Devolution*, pp. 4-5.

work and a few primary schools. But with the passing of time, the mission came to assume an over-exalted position in the minds of the people. Hence in 1922, church and mission were amalgamated, under a council of 16 members—the majority of whom have generally been Indians. In 1928 the constitution of the council was revised along simpler lines, and the Indian members given the majority of votes as well as a majority of committee seats. The number of committee seats is to be increased still further, in proportion to the increase of Indian money. An executive council of three Danes and two Indians transacts the routine business. The work under the council is not handed over to missionaries or the Indian church as such. Each case is considered on its merits. Thus of the two hospitals, one is run by an Indian, paid the same as the Dane who runs the other. The high school is managed by an Indian. Indian pastors are in charge of missionary districts, and Danes are pastors of churches. Difficulties due to personalities naturally arise, but on the whole the scheme is reported to be very satisfactory, resulting in increased trust and goodwill.¹

DANISH MISSION IN SOUTH INDIA

- (1) Prior to 1911: Mission here.
 Church here.
- (2) 1911-22: Mission here. Church here.
 (Each having separate functions.)
- (3) 1922- : Church and Mission amalgamated.

(d) *The American Board Mission in Jaffna, Ceylon*, has been experimenting with devolution schemes for nearly thirty years. From the time

¹ Philip, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7.

of its organization about 1904, the church council has been entrusted with the oversight of the churches and evangelistic work. The mission made a small annual grant to the church council, but it was not long before the majority of the churches were self-supporting.

In 1919, the council was also given the management and control of village vernacular education, a responsibility involving over 10,000 pupils. For this work also the mission made a yearly grant, though increased Government grants have made the mission grant less and less necessary.

In 1926 a scheme was put forward for diminishing the mission grants for both evangelistic and educational work, with the end in view that in five years the contributions might cease altogether.

All work save that of the major institutions having already been transferred by the mission, the next step was to constitute a board for the management of these institutions. The scheme as approved by a majority of the churches and forwarded to the home board for approval consisted in the formation of a central board under which would be a number of local boards guiding the affairs of the local institutions. Members of the central board would be the heads of the institutions concerned and 15 representatives chosen by the churches. The central board would choose the heads of institutions, receive foreign funds, and be responsible for certain matters of general policy. The local boards would be responsible for the immediate affairs of the institutions.

Devolution in Jaffna has resulted in the Indian Christians taking more interest in the work, assuming more positions of leadership, and contributing larger funds for the support of the work. The missionary personnel has steadily decreased, and in

the not too distant future will probably be withdrawn entirely.¹

AMERICAN BOARD JAFFNA MISSION.

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| (1) 1904: | Mission:
Education and
Major institu-
tions. | Jaffna Council:
Churches and evangelistic
work. Small yearly grant
from mission. |
| (2) 1919: | Mission:
Major institu-
tions. | Jaffna Council:
Council also given control
of village vernacular edu-
cation. Received both mis-
sion and government
grants. |
| (3) Current: | Central Board: to appoint heads of institutions,
fix salaries, approve budgets, etc. | |

Local Boards: to manage internal affairs of institutions. The Council (see above) is one of the institutions to be placed under the central board.

2. *Joint Committees of Church and Mission Re- sponsible for Work :*

(a) *The Punjab Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.* believes that "the aims and development of the Indian Church will best be realized when the Church and Mission are united in the closest co-operation, and when such co-operation is the dominating principle in all forms of their work."²

By the terms of the Plan of Co-operation all evangelistic work within the respective areas of the Lahore and Ludhiana Church Councils formerly carried on by the Punjab Mission "and

¹ Harrison, M. H., "Steps Toward Devolution in Jaffna," *South India United Church Herald*, October, 1930.

² *Plan of Co-operation between the Punjab Mission of the Presbyterian Church in U.S.A., and the Church Councils of Lahore and Ludhiana of the United Church of Northern India*, p. 2.

all educational work carried on, in and for the villages, schools for non-Christian girls, zenana work, and Home Mission work formerly carried on by the Church Councils, and all Indian workers ordinarily required to maintain and conduct that work, and all funds appropriated therefor," shall be entrusted to the evangelistic committees in the church council areas,—each committee being composed of 24 members, of whom 12 are missionaries elected by the mission, and 12 Indians elected by the respective church councils.¹

A joint educational committee is responsible for all educational work within the area of the two church councils, save the projects entrusted to the evangelistic committees and the union institutions. The educational committee also administers the funds provided for this work.

A joint medical committee cares for the medical work and administers its funds.

An intermediary board, composed of 10 elected members and the treasurer of the mission, acts as finance committee and attempts to co-ordinate all branches of work. It reviews the proceedings of the several committees and hears and decides cases of appeal from the decisions of the committees. In case the mission or either church council disagree with an action of any committee, they have the privilege of presenting the reasons for disagreement to the intermediary board. The board also acts as an interim executive committee to handle any urgent business.

Powers, funds or work not specifically handed over to the committees or the intermediary board remain with the church councils or the mission as before the plan of co-operation came into being.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

An officer of the mission informs me that there is considerable dissatisfaction with the plan as "the sense of responsibility on the part of the Indian partners has not increased as it was hoped." Although the management of 7/8 of the funds received from America for the work has been transferred to the joint committees, the Indians do not as yet look upon the shared work as "our work." The Plan is due for an early revision.

PUNJAB MISSION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Elected intermediary board acts as finance committee and attempts to co-ordinate work. Reviews proceedings of joint committees and hears and decides appeals from committee decisions.

Joint Evangelistic Committees responsible for evangelistic and village educational work.	Joint Educational Committee responsible for education other than primary and union.	Joint Medical Committee cares for medical work.
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Powers, funds, work not specifically designated remain with mission and church councils.

(b) *The Madura Mission of the American Board* illustrates a type of church and mission co-operation in operation in the area of the South India United Church. The 34 churches associated with the mission in the Madura area "are organized into a compact ecclesiastical body known as the Madura Church Council," which is one of the 8 councils of the S.I.U.C. Every ordained missionary of the mission is by right a member of the church council, while some of the missionaries "to whom the mission has assigned work in direct relation to the church council are even subject to the action of the council in respect of their residence and the particular form of work assigned to them." The

church council is dependent upon the grants given by the American Board for the maintenance of about 77 per cent of its work. At the same time, the "council's hand is free in the apportionment of its funds to the several forms of work for which it has been made responsible, viz., evangelistic work and elementary schools. Other activities, such as medical work and the higher educational institutions, are managed by councils composed partly of missionaries and partly of Indian representatives." Presumably, as the mission gradually withdraws from its activities, leaving more and more to the Indian community, such councils will be enlarged and will evolve into boards of trustees with full powers to own property and manage the several forms of work entrusted to them.¹

THE AMERICAN MADURA MISSION

The Madura Church Council, made up of Indians and ordained missionaries, is responsible for evangelistic work and elementary schools.

The Mission controls higher education and medical and institutional work.

New scheme looks to:

Church Council: evangelistic work and elementary schools.	Joint Boards of missionaries and Indians to control higher education, medical and institutional work.	Mission; missionary salaries, housing, etc.
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(c) In the *Marathi Mission of the American Board* all local work is under the direction of the station councils, containing an equal number of Indians and missionaries; while the general coun-

¹ *American Madura Mission Report, 1929.*

cil, composed of all missionaries and an approximately equal number of Indian delegates, is the policy-determining body and final court of appeal. The general council co-operates with the church councils of the United Church of Northern India in carrying on the district evangelistic work. Pastors of the churches are members of, and under the direction of the church councils.

Within the Marathi Mission is a body known as the Indian Mission Board, which is responsible to the General Council for conducting Christian work in its area, and superintending the administrative training and employment of fellow workers. Six members of the Board (2 of whom are to be missionaries) are elected by the general council, 4 by the church councils, 1 to 3 members by the Board from its own workers, and 1 or 2 independent Indians (i.e., not in the employ of the general council or Board). The Board receives its appropriations from the general council and small grants-in-aid from the church council. At the present time, 4 districts previously manned by foreign missionaries, are under the Indian Mission Board.

The main objection to the scheme is that it is wheels within wheels, and adds another, and almost competing administrative unit. As the work of the mission is re-organized, Indian Mission Board, mission and church will most probably be merged.

AMERICAN MARATHI MISSION

General Council: A joint
policy determining body
and court of appeal.

Mission: Missionary salaries,
housing, etc.

**Station Councils and Indian
Mission Board** responsible
for local work and report-
ing to the General Coun-
cil.

(d) Certain benefits are claimed for the general scheme of carrying on work by joint committees representing church and mission :

- (1) The church is being given a rightful voice in the determination of policies and methods of work, particularly evangelistic work.
- (2) The old suspicion and distrust of the mission is being removed as Indians are coming to understand better the problems of the mission.
- (3) The church is assuming more responsibility for evangelistic work.
- (4) The plans are of educational value for the Indian church.
- (5) The mission is coming to a better understanding of the mind of the Indian church leaders and is benefiting from the counsel of Indians.

(e) On the other hand, there are certain objections :

- (1) The plans are often too cumbersome and involved.
- (2) Too much emphasis is laid upon money and administrative machinery, not enough on the spiritual nature of the work.
- (3) Burdens and responsibilities are laid upon the church which the church is unable to carry.
- (4) The Indian membership in the joint committees is too often composed of mission agents, who on the one hand often lack independence, and on the other, vote regarding their own status, allowances, etc.
- (5) Indians are often slow to express their opinions, and in the pressure for time at

business sessions, the more forceful missionary opinion tends to dominate.

- (6) A disproportionate amount of influence has been placed in the hands of small groups of educated Indians : the rank and file of the workers have very little voice in the work.
- (7) Though not intended to do so, the plan often lowers the prestige of the church in the minds of the worker. Just as before, the church was overshadowed by the mission, so now it is overshadowed by the joint committee.
- (8) The natural growth of the church is either accelerated or retarded as the case may be.¹

3. No distinction between Church and Mission :

(a) *The Methodist Episcopal Church* claims to make no distinction between church and mission. Bishop Badley of the Bombay area, says regarding this point, "For one supremely important thing we can be thankful,—that our church has not had in a serious form the problem of 'church' *vs.* 'mission'. Today the most significant part of our organization is not the mission and its boards, but the church and its life. From the inception of our work, our leaders have recognized that we were not here to establish a mission, but to build a church. No machinery was introduced that was not vital to the church whose representatives had come to bring the message and spirit of the Master, and, with Him, to help build His church in this great land. All conferences, councils, commissions and committees were related to the church, and while the term 'mission' was used, it was never primary in the

¹ Cf. Philip, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-18.

thought of the Methodist Episcopal Church in India. As early as 1866, only ten years after William Butler landed as the founder of our work, the first Indian district superintendent was appointed, and the number has steadily increased until now 50 per cent of the 82 districts are manned by Indian men. The problem of 'devolution' that has so seriously taxed others has been for us only an evolution; we have proceeded more along the lines already laid down and partially followed up."¹

Regarding the same matter Bishop Robinson says, "In theory our church and the mission are the same. Every member of the church in this land has every right of voting and of office possessed by any member in any other land. The missionaries are members of the same conferences in India as are all national ministers, also with equal privileges of position and vote. . . The only place in the organization where anything that can be termed a mission comes into appearance is in what is termed the finance committees,—bodies elected by the annual conferences, the personnel of which has to be approved by the Board of Foreign Missions. That in at least one of these finance committees a majority of the members are nationals, and in most of the others the two elements are approximately even, indicates that these committees, though handling all the finances of the conference, even the appropriations that are sent to the field by the Board of Foreign Missions, are seldom influenced by discordant interests. It is to be noted, however, that a like amount of progress has not as yet been attained by the Women's Foreign Missionary Society, largely because the task of developing a body of responsible workers among women,

¹ Private Letter of December 19, 1930.

under existing conditions, has been much more difficult. They are nevertheless, making real progress."¹

An experienced Methodist missionary says that while the Methodists make no distinction between mission and church, yet the missionary, because of his training, is generally given the positions of responsibility, and because of his aggressiveness assumes too much power.²

(b) *The Wesleyan Methodist Mission* also claims to make no distinction between church and mission. Save for the personal relations of the missionaries to the Home Committee, all other matters are considered by the district and provincial synods. All Indian ministers and a certain number of laymen are members of the synods. The affairs of the local churches are administered by Indians. The district and provincial synods have control of all funds, apart from the allowances to missionaries, which are fixed in England.

The scheme seems to be working with different success in different sections, depending largely upon the personal equation. An Indian critic describes it as more of an ideal than a reality. He states that the majority of the officials of the local church bodies are either missionaries or mission workers. The church is responsible for a few schools and evangelistic stations, but the major institutional work and larger rural areas are manned by missionaries. He feels that if devolution is to be a reality, the responsibility for administering all the work in a given area must be given over to the church. "Speaking generally," he

¹ Robinson, J. W., in *Indian Church Problems of Today*, pp. 35-36.

² Philip, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

says, "our missionaries have not yet been able to take the attitude of co-operation with the Indian council and be increasingly guided by the same. There is scarcely an instance where the missionary who has large responsibilities has a group of Indians even to take counsel with about his work. They seem to be trying to educate the Indian Church to take up responsibility by giving them a little bit here and there, rather than seek to bring Indian guidance more and more on the Christian work that is attempted in this land. . . . In several cases the transference of small responsibilities to the Indian Church has created in the missionaries' mind a spirit of rivalry to the Indian Church. . . . I do feel that it is insincere to talk of transferring responsibility to the Indian Church bodies. . . . when all that they mean is to let the local congregations manage their own affairs with a little bit of work added which is financed by the mission."¹

4. Church and mission as distinct, but co-operating entities.

This type of organization generally occurs :

(a) When the mission does not regard the church as ready to accept responsibility for the entire work.

(b) When the mission and church regard each other as working in separate spheres, e.g., the church doing the evangelistic work and the mission the educational work.

(c) When it is believed that such division will best enable the church to conduct its affairs in an independent fashion.

As it works out, however, the mission with its money and institutions generally has so much more

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-13.

prestige than the church that the situation is a continual source of dissatisfaction. The general trend is away from separateness and toward a merger of church and mission.

The National Christian Council, at its Calcutta meeting in November, 1926, issued the following statement regarding devolution :

"Missions are now practically unanimous in accepting the principle that the Church on the field should be made the centre of all Christian activities. The principle is also accepted that the Indian Church on the field is the natural body to advise missions as to how best money and men available for Christian work in India can be utilized, and that foreign missions should secure the real co-operation of Indian Church bodies in the work they do in their areas. The practical application of these principles raises, however, certain problems. . . .

(a) Both the missions and the Indian Church bodies should have clear ideas as to what is transferred and what is taken over. . . . Is the work as carried on by foreign missions in the past in the departments transferred to be continued more or less in the same way by the Indian church? Is there any such moral obligation, explicit, or implicit, on the Indian Boards when they accept grants of money from missions for work transferred? Or, is the Indian church under this scheme assuming responsibility for making Christ known in the area, without any commitment as to whether it should continue the system of work already established by missions?" If the Church desires to change methods "are the Indian Boards and joint Boards constituted under the various devolution schemes sufficiently flexible to welcome such new ventures of faith and make facilities for carrying them out under favourable conditions?"

(b) Financial issues will have to be faced. In most cases the Indian church cannot support the work devolved upon it. Must it be assumed that devolved work "is to be maintained on the same scale and in the same manner" as conducted by foreign missions? "Why should not new methods of work involving less expenditure of money be tried and experiments be made to enlist more and more of voluntary service?" Should not the attempt be made "to discover and apply methods of work suited to the traditions and genius of the people?"

(c) "Does the Indian Church really make its voice heard and does Indian opinion influence vitally the devolution boards?" The mere presence of an Indian majority does not assure this. The Indians generally have less education and less administrative experience than the missionaries. Further, the number of mission agents on the devolution boards "makes it difficult for any original and vigorous Indian point of view to be brought to bear on the policies and decisions of the Board."

(d) Indians may be able to operate the devolved machinery, but can they best express their spiritual life through this new arrangement? Organization is necessary, but over-organization only stifles life. "Are we ready to alter our organizations, and even to scrap them if necessary, when it is found that they stand in the way of the free development of the inner life?"

(e) Has devolution "called forth new sources of spiritual power?" The things transferred will only "belong to the Indian Church. . . . when they grow out of its life, through experiments and failures, as the result of Christ-inspired men dreaming dreams and seeing visions. . . . The supreme test of the success of any devolution scheme is

whether the Indian church concerned is inspired and urged by it to explore and discover new sources of spiritual power it has in Jesus Christ, and use them in meeting adequately the new responsibilities."

(f) "Closely connected with the above is the problem of making the rank and file in the Indian Church enthusiastic about the privileges and opportunities of Christian service which devolution offers."

(g) "What is implicit in devolution is that the Christian West has valuable contributions to make to the Indian Church and thus enable her to manifest to India, God as revealed in Jesus Christ. The question arises, 'Where does the Christian West get its best chance to make this contribution—in association with an Indian Church body which is still weak and dependent on outside help for its very existence, or in association with Indian bodies which have already gained an independent life?'"¹

The Enlarged Meeting of the National Christian Council, convening in Madras, December 29, 1928 to January 2, 1929, considered the matter of devolution in the light of the Jerusalem Conference. Regarding the relations between the Younger and Older Churches the Findings state: "The goal which we set before ourselves is that the control and direction of all the work and organization of any communion in a given area shall be by the body of the Christians of the communion of the area, of whatever race they may be. The conscious pursuit of this goal is of vital importance to the growth of the church, and its progress should never be retarded on the plea that the work of the

¹ *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, vol. iii, pp. 235ff.

organization was originally started, or even for a time was, or must in the future continue to be, financed by the foreign missionary body. . . . Church and mission should be prepared to recast their organization and change their procedure so as to give the fullest scope for the self-expression of the Indian Church. But this recasting does not mean the rigid adoption of any single scheme of devolution. Each scheme must be adapted to the stage of development which the congregations concerned have reached; and the schemes may vary even in the same area. It is also wise to state the fundamental fact that devolution in itself does not create spiritual life. It only enlarges the field for the exercise of spiritual gifts. Without the spirit of Christ working in the persons concerned every such scheme must break down.”¹

The first step toward the goal of devolution, continues the Report, “will be the organization of church councils for the groups of local churches of each communion in the area and the transference to them of real responsibility for pastoral work and evangelism, and at least the primary education of their own community. After that, the transfer of such other work as is felt to be essential to the Church’s life and ministry may take place as soon as the church council has in its membership those who have experience and knowledge of such work.”

“In all cases where financial help is received from the older churches of the West for the development of Christian activities in India, such funds should be so administered that the self-respect, self-reliance and initiative of the churches in India is not destroyed, and the younger churches should

¹ *Council Report*, p. 47.

be taken into full partnership in determining the policy and administration of such funds. . . . We would endorse the Jerusalem Conference Finding that financial grants from the older churches should be given to and administered by the people themselves or agencies appointed by them and not through Mission Committees on the field."¹

In thinking upon the subject of devolution as a whole, certain considerations can well be kept in mind :

(a) Since the state of the Indian Church varies in different sections of the country, one rule cannot be applied universally.

(b) Since most schemes of devolution are in the experimental stage, one should be cautious about making hasty conclusions as to the success or failure of any given project.

(c) Since there is no recognized technique of devolution, the contributions of both Indians and missionaries should be welcomed.

(d) Indian churches and missions alike should have clear ideas as to what is to be transferred and what responsibilities assumed.

(e) Missions should assist the Indian churches along the road of self-support. Independence rather than dependence should be encouraged.

(f) Efforts should be made to ascertain the true mind of the Indian Church, rather than the opinions of a select few.

(g) The personal equation is of supreme importance in the matter of devolution. The "will to succeed" overcomes many obstacles.

(h) Perfect organizations and liberal constitutions are less to be aimed at than a real increase in spiritual power.

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

The principal hindrances to successful devolution are :

(a) The costly institutions built up by the missionary which the Indian church can scarcely hope to support without foreign help.

(b) The unwillingness of missionaries to let go and to trust.

(c) Lack of forward-looking Indian leadership. The well-educated Indian is too often educated away from his people, and the lesser educated man incapable of exercising high gifts of leadership.

(d) Too many Indian Christian leaders are ready to assume nominal authority, but are reluctant to bear the burdens which that authority demands.

(e) Lack of constructive imagination upon the part of both missionaries and Indians.

(f) Too much individualism on both sides and inability to do constructive team work.¹

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the goal of devolution—to merge the mission in the church, or to transfer certain mission responsibilities to the church? Should the church accept responsibility for schools, hospitals, etc., or for evangelistic work alone?

2. Who is to decide what is to be transferred and when transfer is to take place?

3. What principles should govern the transfer of responsibility from mission to church?

4. Can mission and church be so amalgamated as not to appear parallel or competing organizations?

5. What type of devolution gives most promise of really strengthening the national church?

¹ Cf. Lapp, George A., "Indianisation of the Church in India", *National Christian Council Review*, August, 1928.

6. What should be the relation of the missionary to the church during the various stages of transfer?
7. Does an equal number of missionaries and nationals associated in the control of any work, guarantee equality?
8. Does a majority of nationals actually mean national control?
9. How can the problem of "missionary domination" best be solved?
10. Should church representation upon managing committees be dependent upon the amount of funds raised by the church?
11. Does foreign financial support of necessity imply foreign control?
12. Can any principles be laid down for the continuance of foreign financial help?
13. How can the church be helped to assume a more important place in the eyes of the workers? (The present tendency is for Christian workers to prefer mission to church positions.)
14. Do managing committees made up almost wholly of "mission agents" reflect the true mind of the church?
15. How can the laity of the church be aroused to assume new responsibilities?
16. Is everything possible being done to train nationals to accept positions of responsible leadership?
17. Should work be transferred simply for the sake of devolution, or should other principles govern?
18. Is it inevitable that in the beginning devolution will lay too much emphasis upon finance and administration, to the neglect of the spiritual side?
19. Does the transfer of work carry with it the obligation to conduct work on the established lines?
20. What kind of help do the national churches most desire from the churches of the West?

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CHAPTER IV

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH?

ALTHOUGH the ideal of missionary societies for years has been that of making Christianity, rather than any particular brand of it, at home in India, Western denominationalism of every variety has taken root in India. It is both pathetic and ludicrous to hear Indian Christians calling themselves "S.P.G. Christians," "C.M.S. Christians," "American Presbyterian Christians," "Church of Scotland Christians," etc. An Indian church is in the making, but speaking generally, the church in India is largely Western in its life and methods.

The demand for a church independent of foreign control has been slower in India than in China and Japan. Writing in 1910, Mr. Robert E. Speer said, "It is a hopeful sign of the reality of the work done in Japan and China that the question has arisen and demanded solution there, and it is a discouraging element in the situation in India that after a hundred years of mission work in that land the ideal of so many of the men who should be leaders of the native church, engaged in rooting Christianity and its life deep in the soil and native institutions, is to become employees of foreign missionary organizations on the basis and with the status of foreign missionaries. . . . It is high time that the question raised long ago in Japan should be raised in India, not the petty and fallacious question of how to control the expenditure of mission funds, but the deep and vital question of how to build up a true native church which shall

be able to lay hold upon the living movements of the nation and give them genius and guidance."¹

Granted that Mr. Speer's criticism was a fair one, there are reasons for the slow development of the Indian Church. A major reason for the lack of an independent spirit within the church is that a large number of the Christian converts have been drawn from among the outcastes. Although there are now approximately 6,000,000 Christians among the people of India, and although the rate of increase among the Christians was in the last decade more than three times the rate of increase in the general population, the majority of the converts are being drawn from the depressed classes.

When Christianity came to India, offering to her outcaste peoples hope and deliverance, a great number responded. The desire for righteousness was not always separated from the desire for food or economic advancement, but whatever the motive, Christianity has received into her fold large numbers of illiterate people—many of whom, through centuries of oppression, have acquired the mentality of slaves. Add to this the pressing poverty and almost universal indebtedness of the people and one can begin to glimpse the problem.

The missionary treatment of these outcaste converts has not always been wise. Oppressed by the great poverty of the people, it has been easy for the missionaries to hand out money—a drop in the bucket compared with the actual needs of the suppliant, but another link in the chain of dependence.

The whole method of propagating Christianity in India has tended to encourage financial dependence. The missionary has come in as a foreigner, backed by

¹ *Christianity and the Nations*, pp. 125-26.

foreign money. He has regarded it as essential in carrying out his work to acquire property and to build institutions. The money for this has not come from the people themselves, but from abroad. The Indian people have been the recipients. And as the enterprise began, so it has continued. New demands arise, and since the church itself cannot supply them, help is invoked from abroad. The criticism has been expressed in India, that while an Indian can afford to be a Hindu or a Muslim, he needs foreign help to be a Christian.

The attitude of the missionary himself has not tended to encourage independence within the church. As Roland Allen has well pointed out : 'The missionary has desired to help the people to whom he was sent. He has been anxious to do something for them. And he has done much. In fact he has done everything. He has "taught them, baptized them, shepherded them." He has "managed their funds, ordered their services, built their churches, provided their teachers." He has "nursed them, fed them, doctored them." He has "done everything for them, but very little with them." He has "treated them as 'dear children,' but as not as 'brethren'.'" Such a course of action may get results, but it is not the educational method. We learn by doing things for ourselves, and not by having others do things for us. Encouraging dependence is not the way to train for independence.

At the same time, the Christian Church is making progress. It has not only played its part in helping the outcaste, in educating women, and in producing men who have filled posts of high responsibility. It is also a thing unique in India. As William Paton, the former secretary of the National

¹ *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*, p. 192.

Christian Council, has pointed out, "Neither Hinduism nor Islam contains anything really equivalent to the conception of the Church. They have nothing corresponding to congregational worship. You may see a great throng at a festival and temples crowded, but they are crowded with individual worshippers. The idea of a spiritual fellowship, imbued with a common life, expressed in ordinary social intercourse, in the worship of God, and in the sacrament of the Holy Communion which is the supreme manifestation of brotherhood, is a purely Christian conception. . . . The value of the church in India is not therefore utilitarian merely These (utilitarian) things are the outcome of its inherent power, but they are not of its essence. It (the Church) is a new social phenomenon in India."¹ It is a community which transcends communalism. It is a social grouping which transcends caste. It has within it creative energy and the social dynamic to revitalize the life of India.

The problems confronting the Indian Church are many and varied :

1. *The problem of educating the church constituency.* Although the Christian community shows an increase of nearly a million and a half in the last decade, the greater part of the increase has been from the illiterate masses—people who can neither read nor write. The Bishop of Dornakal declares that at a very generous estimate, scarcely 15 per cent. of the rural Christians are literate. Though this is considerable in advance of the general literacy rate for rural India, the Indian church cannot hope to assume her rightful position of leadership, without an intensive campaign for the education of her own membership.

¹ *Social Ideals in India*, p. 82.

Night schools, continuation schools, adult classes and visual education must supplement the day schools. The task is a tremendous one, but looked upon as the programme of a generation it is by no means impossible. With a teaching ministry and schools alert to life needs, the Indian church will unquestionably raise the intellectual level of its membership.

2. *The problem of maintaining a suitable standard of church membership.*—The influx of large numbers of illiterate, and often spiritually unprepared members into the Christian community creates many difficulties. Some leaders contend that the church is a school and that the simple desire to learn of the Christian way should be sufficient qualification for entrance. Others hold the church to be a fellowship of believers and would restrict membership to the initiated. Both schools of thought have their adherents, but the general practice in India has been to make entrance into the church relatively simple, trusting that Christian teaching and discipline will soon begin to make themselves felt in the individual life.

Among certain of the churches the standard of church membership appears to be too scholastic, based upon an intellectual acceptance of creeds and theological positions imported almost bodily from the West. Thus the United Church of Northern India, not only puts forward 12 articles of faith, including the acceptance of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the only infallible rule of faith and duty, an acceptance of the doctrine of original sin, the theory of the atonement as the satisfaction of divine justice, the second coming and divine judgment; but also commends the Westminster Confession, the Welsh Calvinistic Confession, and the Confession and Canons of the Synod

of Dort—"as worthy exponents of the Word of God."

If the church is really to touch people where they are, it would seem that its function needs to be interpreted in terms of idealized social fellowship. The constitution and canons of most of the established Indian churches are sorely in need of a humanistic emphasis. The Indian church will have new power when its membership really connects religion with daily living. And this emphasis must be made from the beginning.

3. *The problem of a reinterpretation of theology.*—The problem raised in the last section leads naturally to a consideration of the theology of the Indian church. The missionaries of the last generation indoctrinated, and they indoctrinated well. A compensatory heaven does hold attractions for a people who are denied even the most elementary satisfactions of this life. But can this other-worldly doctrine hold and challenge the growing number of educated Christian youth? Is there not danger that Christianity will come to be looked upon as simply another set of outworn superstitions? In India, as in other parts of the world, religion is being challenged by secularism and an other-worldly gospel appears to have little chance of coping with the problem. The theology of the Indian church must be reinterpreted to meet the changed conditions of the modern age.

4. *The problem of the development of Indian leadership.*—One of the leading missions in Western India recently made a study of the Indian personnel employed by the mission in evangelistic work. At the time of the study (1930) 85 evangelistic workers were in the service of the mission. "It is difficult," says the Report, "to apply a criterion to the intellectual ability and Christian influence

of our workers. The committee has attempted to see every evangelistic worker in his own district and whenever possible in his own station. We have talked with them freely and frankly and in this way we have to a fair degree ascertained the standing of the worker with regard to his intelligence and mental growth. 6 of the 85 come under 'A' class, who we have reason to believe, are growing day by day. 40 appear to be more or less at a standstill and 39 indicate deterioration. If our method comes anywhere near to an approximation of accuracy, it is a disheartening situation to realize that only 7 per cent of our evangelistic workers reveal unmistakable evidences of mental growth. We have tried to view the facts sympathetically, and we will point out a few reasons why the situation is, as it is.

(a) The majority of the scanty number who show growth reside in the station where literary means are within easy reach, and fellowship with, and guidance of, missionaries and other leaders are available.

(b) Nearly 70 per cent of our evangelistic workers are stationed in villages where the general atmosphere does not lend itself to intellectual development. It indeed requires an exceptionally strong mental aptitude, if one is not to succumb to village surroundings. We are sorry to say that the average preacher in the village is too often an easy victim to this down-pulling current.

(c) Of the 85 workers, one is a passed matriculate, 8 have completed the 7th anglo-vernacular standard, 11 have had some English, and 65 have had purely a vernacular education. The qualifications of many of these do not meet the needs of today. This reveals to some extent why our evangelistic work is not more fruitful.

(d) A majority of our evangelists are self-satisfied. Whatever education they may have had in the training or theological schools seems to have quenched their intellectual thirst. In spite of the growing vernacular literature, very few are interested in or capable of buying any books. In some cases, the books found in the homes are still unread."¹

While the picture drawn in this Report is of one particular area, it can be duplicated with slight variations, in almost any section. With notable exceptions, the rank and file of Indian leadership is of too low a standard to be either spiritually or organizationally efficient. A strong Indian church awaits a new type of leader.

As the Jerusalem Meeting Report points out : "The problem is the training of leaders for a living organism. The future leaders of the indigenous churches will be men and women called from home, school and church, who will be true to the social genius of their people, who will retain the fine zest of spiritual vigour, and who are free personalities. Just as truly will they be those who have had the opportunity of availing themselves of all those elements in the Christian heritage which can enrich and empower for ever-enlarging service.

"It is quite possible that the training centre which will render this kind of service for the Church is yet to arise. The curriculum and training method appropriate for such an institution are perhaps yet to be discovered. Certainly experiments made in recent years in higher education among the older churches and having to do with the constant alternation between study and actual life situations ought to be reckoned with and may point the way.

¹ *Evangelistic Survey of the American Marathi Mission, 1930.*

"In the meantime, the theological colleges and Bible training schools need to be studied and re-appraised. Curricula and teaching staff should be adjusted in the direction of achieving such a training ideal."¹

5. The problem of the generation of new spiritual power.—No one is better qualified to speak upon the subject of the Indian church than Dr. Nicol Macnicol, the former secretary of the National Christian Council. Says Dr. Macnicol, "The tidal wave that swept . . . (such numbers of outcastes into the church between 1881 and 1921) has begun now to slow down and to recede. . . . The Church has leisure now to look at herself and consider how far she is truly to be described as Christian. When she does so she cannot see herself (what Church can?) as 'without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.' The wrongs inflicted through the centuries upon these fugitives from oppression still work out their evil consequences. When ignorance, superstition, fear have been so deeply wrought into the soul, they cannot be exorcised in a moment or by a word, even by the great re-creative word of Christ. Not at least unless that word has really reached the understanding and the heart. But thousands of these people were drawn into the church by nothing more than a sense of bondage and a dream of deliverance. In their case the Root that is Christ has no more than begun as yet to send forth tendrils. The fact that so many of these serfs have found freedom within the Christian Church is at once her glory and a heavy burden crushing her to the earth.

"It is of the crushing burden that those who realize the high calling of the Church are at

¹ *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, vol. iii, pp. 213-14.

the present time most fully conscious. This fact creates most of the problems for which her leaders are seeking a solution almost despairingly. Mr. T. R. Glover has told us how in the early centuries the Christian 'out-thought' the pagan, 'out-lived' him and 'out-died' him. The fleeting glimpse that these outcastes have gained of the love of Christ may indeed in not a few cases enable them to suffer for Him and even to die for Him, for suffering is their lot. . . . But how to 'out-think' the Hindus who kept them in ignorance for centuries is a far-off attainment for them yet, and how to 'out-live' them is a lesson that such depressed classes cannot but be slow to learn. This is all the more the case since in India among the higher classes there have been not a few who have journeyed along the highway of the Spirit. How hard then it must be for those who have come up from slavery and ignorance to make good their claim to have found the Way and the Goal. 'Hindu India refuses to accept the claim when from among its own sons have arisen men and women who have attained nearer the Christ ideal than the Christians around them. Daily, hourly, the Church in India is confronted with this challenge.'¹

Mr. P. O. Philip, the Joint Secretary of the National Christian Council, says, "What the young church in India needs more than anything else today is a revival of spiritual life which will release for the service of the Kingdom all its latent resources. This spiritual revival is not something which comes and goes like a mighty blast of wind; rather, it is the creation by the Spirit of God among the rank and file of the church of that sense of wonder and gratitude for the revelation of God in

¹ *The Christian Task in India*, pp. 244-45.

Christ, which compels them to give their hearts to Him and constrains them to share that experience and all that it implies with their fellowmen. Such a revival can come only by prayer and patient toil. This prayerful and patient toil should extend to fields like religious education activities in the home, the school and the community; the training of teachers and ministers, and special missions and retreats; and it will involve making use of the best methods and the latest results of study and experiment, and also utilizing the services of the best men and women available, whether of the East or of the West. Here as in nothing else, the younger churches stand in need of the assistance which the experienced Church of the West can render.”¹

6. *The problem of entering into the fellowship of the church universal, without hindering its own free development.*—The Church of Christ is not simply a denominational church, an American Church or a British Church. It is a church with a long history, expressing itself in many varying forms. Its bond of unity is loyalty to Christ and his ideals. The problem facing the Indian church is to take all that is best in historic Christianity without at the same time stunting its own natural growth. Though the forms of worship and organization followed today are largely Western, there are many who believe that there is a genuine need for an Indian expression of the Church universal. Thus it has been said that “the richness of the beauty of the Lord” is so inexhaustible, that a thousand mouths should unite in singing His praises, a thousand tongues should convey in human language, to human ears, “the music of His wonderful name,” and “intellects and hearts trained in

¹ *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, vol. iii, pp. 199-200.

a thousand different ways to measure the depth of His love and respond to it adequately, are needed. . . . India with an unbroken and lofty religious tradition, dating from the unrecorded past of human history, has undoubtedly a share to contribute to the ever-increasing volume of tribute which the race is rising to pay to its crown and glory—the Son of Man.'

Further, "If the life and mission of Jesus is to be understood by the Hindu, these should be expressed in language natural to the religious thought of India. The articles of faith in which the Christian seeks to explain to his intellect the experience intuitively grasped and enjoyed by his heart, should be restated in the thought forms which the deep piety of India has employed to make its devotion appear reasonable

"It is an inalienable right of every nation to possess a life of its own and the freedom to express itself in its own way. This right covers . . . religious as well as political freedom or self-determination."¹

(a) *Music* forms an integral part of all church services. But it is Indian music alone which really stirs an Indian. As an Indian writer has recently pointed out, "Christian hymns sung in Tamil do not make Tamil *gitas*. The original hymns in English are most wonderful in their richness of spiritual power and beauty, but the translations . . . are most unnatural and stilted. This is not the kind of poetry, nor is this the kind of music that can express the deep joys and aspirations of the soul of an Indian. The tunes are exotic, and the translations make the songs totally unsuited to convey intelligently the various types of religious

¹ Job, G. V., "The Indian Expression of the Church Universal," *Report of Third Ministers' Conference*, Pasumalai, 1922.

experience of the Tamil people."¹ Another Indian writer says : "The translated hymns and chants satisfy neither Indian nor European laws of poetry or grammar, but are a sort of mongrel that only provokes the pity and contempt of scholars, both Indian and foreign. . . . How is an 'unbeliever' to be inspired and led into adoration of the Adorable One, if the strains of music that rise from our places of worship strike such jarring notes upon his ears! Is not Christian music to be a vehicle of Christian witness also?"²

"In the beginning," says the first writer, "when lyrics were not composed or were few, or in the transition period, when people accustomed to hymns and English tunes might find the Tamil lyrics unfamiliar, European hymns might have been necessary, but they are certainly not necessary now If in the early days of missionary labours, the Tamil tunes were discarded, it was because there was a fear in their minds that the strong Hindu associations of these enchanting tunes might prove a stumbling stone to the converts, and also because the zeal of the missionaries would not permit the infant church to have anything to do with things pagan. And now, if it is suggested that we we should return to these tunes, it is not because we wish to plead for the acceptance or toleration of Hindu doctrines or forms of devotion, but because of the recognition of the fact that the Tamil tunes and Tamil *gitas* alone are best suited to the genius of the Tamil, and that Tamil Christians must use them rather than any other."³

¹ Sargunam, M. J., "Indian Music and Church Worship," *South India United Church Herald*, September, 1929.

² Jesudason, S., "Indigenous Expression of Christianity in India," *National Christian Council Review*, January, 1931.

³ Sargunam, *op. cit.*

(b) *Architecture*.—The greater part of the church architecture in India today has been transplanted from the West, but there is a growing feeling that "an architecture that has been evolved as a result of European Christianity influenced by different culture, outlook and conditions, both climatic and temperamental, when transplanted to another country so utterly different as India is from Europe, is to say the least, a 'misfit.'"¹ Accordingly experiments are being made in constructing Christian churches according to Indian ideals. At Trinity College, Kandy, Ceylon, a beautiful church is being fashioned after Buddhistic architecture. In the *Christu-Kula Ashram* at Tirupattur, North Arcot, a Christian church adapted from Dravidian temple architecture is in process of construction. The *Christa Seva Sangh Ashram* in Poona has recently completed a little shrine for private devotion, fashioned in an entirely Indian style. Several years ago, Mr. B. C. Sircar, of the Y.M.C.A., built a small Christian temple, in Hindu style, among the Hindu temples at Puri. Many churches in various parts of India have made less striking adaptations, but the idea of patterning Christian churches after the existing architecture of other religions is gaining ground rapidly.

(c) *Some suggestions for the Indianization of worship*.—Various Indian writers have put forward suggestions looking toward the Indianization of the service of worship. Thus it has been suggested :—

- (1) That the worshippers should sit on the floor and not on benches.
- (2) That the Indian worshipper should remove his shoes rather than his turban upon entering the church. Indian

¹ Jesudason, *op. cit.*

custom differs from European in this respect.

- (3) That only Indian tunes should be used.
- (4) That more attention should be paid to entering the church with a clean body. The Hindu bathes before entering the temple. A tank for washing purposes near the church would be quite Indian.
- (5) That in the service of worship there should be more of adoration and praise and less of petition.
- (6) The churches should be open at all times for private worship and meditation, as are the Hindu temples.
- (7) That the building itself should inspire to reverence and not be simply a lecture hall.
- (8) That church organization should be simplified.
- (9) That the ministry of the church should more nearly approximate the *sadhu* ideal.
- (10) That there should be a re-learning of the higher values in Hindu life and society, which Christianity in its early days so bitterly condemned and ruthlessly discarded.¹

A word of advice and warning is set forth by a previously quoted Indian writer : "You cannot make your Church Indian by throwing away chairs and benches out of the sacred edifice, or by smashing with iconoclastic zeal the European organ, or tabooing Western vestments, liturgy, etc. A little too

¹ Cf., e.g., James, G. P., "Indian Forms of Worship," *Pasu-malai Ministers' Conference*, 1922.

much fuss has been made about these mere superficialities. By all means squat down at the divine service if doing so would be more economic and would induce a more reverent frame of mind. Let us have Indian music where both the language and the music of the lyrics are really good and elevating, but let us not look with suspicion upon those Indian congregations which can both appreciate and sing good Western music. Let us adopt oriental architecture for our churches and devise some form of public worship and private meditation within the temple of God which will appeal to our natural sentiments. But these are not all. And the search for these alone will be a search for . . . forms without the spirit." As Dr. Glover says, "'The force of the Christian movement lay neither in church nor in sacrament, but in men.' And as the Church of India brings forth more spirit-filled men her problem will be solved."¹

7. The problem of self-support.—For many years, self-support has been set forward as a goal of missionary endeavour, but the ideal has always been in advance of actual practice. The extreme poverty of the Indian Christians has made the situation unusually difficult in India, and yet advance is being registered. Thus, the 81,000 Christians connected with the Wesleyan Mission in South India gave in 1925, Rs 48,800 for the support of the ministry. The 82,000 adult Christians associated with the American Telugu Baptist Mission, are reported to have given Rs. 47,326 for the same purpose. The 150,000 adherents of the Anglican Church in the Telugu country contributed about Rs. 75,000 for all religious purposes. The 10,500 members of the churches in the area of the American

¹ Job, G. V., *op. cit.*

Marathi Mission contributed in 1929, Rs. 14,500 for the support of their churches. These figures are most encouraging when one considers the actual economic condition of the people.

From the mission standpoint, the problem is an extremely complicated one. A certain amount of work is on hand which must either be maintained or discarded. There is probably little help for continuing foreign support for certain large church buildings and institutions which we have inherited from the missionaries of a past generation. Twenty years ago, Dr. Speer laid down two principles which are still fundamentally sound : "The first is that we are not to set up and maintain with our foreign funds institutions or ideals which do not enter in and minister to the character of a truly national church. Foreign standards of salary, of architecture, of organization, are natural for us. They may be not only alien but crushing to the native church. The second is that we are not to do for others what they can and ought to do for themselves. There is no kindness, there is positive harm in providing for native agents and native agencies on a scale and for purposes which are beyond what they can and ought to provide for themselves."¹

The Bishop of Dornakal believes that the time has come for vigorous experiments to be made in the direction of making village work independent of outside support. He suggests—

"(a) Serious attempts should be made from the initial stages to make the converts build their own places of worship, and their own village schools. All Oriental nations have a passion for temple building. Indian Christians are not free

¹ *Christianity and the Nations*, p. 137.

from it. This passion should be fostered and the people encouraged to build a place of worship—plain or ornamental, cheap or expensive—something which they can call their own.

(b) Indigenous methods of offering to God should be inculcated. Harvest festivals, *melas*, offerings in kind, first-fruits, rice or flour collections should be encouraged. . . .

(c) Indianization directly advances self-support. The indigenous leader knows how to reach the people's pockets; he knows methods that will appeal to them; his people realize he has no inexhaustible funds at his command—and they respond.

(d) An unpaid voluntary ministry for the Church should be systematically developed. Men with independent means should be encouraged to give of their service freely to the church. Voluntary clergy, voluntary lay evangelists, voluntary lay catechists and the like need to be courageously instituted. The paid system, universally in vogue in missions, is not native to the country; and should be discouraged. . . .

(e) The separation of the village school from congregational work is another much-needed reform.¹

The statement on the "Financial Basis of Support" adopted by the International Missionary Council Meeting at Jerusalem, 1928, lays down good general principles :

"Funds contributed by the older churches must be used in ways which will enable the indigenous churches to develop and strengthen their own means of support, rather than foster the spirit of dependence and reduce the full sense of responsibility.

¹ *The Christian Task in India*, pp. 38ff.

"A thorough appreciation of this point of view may lead all those concerned to give heed to the following proposals regarding the financial basis of the support of the younger churches :

- (a) The development of a self-propagating evangelistic church on a spiritual basis is the greatest factor in securing self-support. Self-support will come naturally with the rising tide of spiritual life.
- (b) Adequate training in systematic individual giving and Christian stewardship is essential.
- (c) Financial aid from the older churches for existing work should be placed on a gradually decreasing scale to be terminated by mutual agreement.
- (d) In general, the financial grants of the older churches should be given to and administered by the churches themselves, or agencies constituted by them.
- (e) The terms of such aid should be mutually agreed upon and then the churches should be entirely free to administer the funds accepted on this basis.
- *(f) All new local churches as far as possible should be started on a self-supporting basis.
- (g) The younger churches should be developed on a scale, in regard to salaries, cost of church building and other expenses, corresponding to the economic life of the people. This principle should be kept in mind particularly by the older churches.
- (h) Where the younger churches are not yet able to assume full responsibility for the administration of grants-in-aid, agencies mutually agreed upon by the older and younger churches may be constituted. In such cases, it should be clearly recognized that the self-respect of the younger church

should be preserved and its self-reliance and initiative be fostered."¹

The Council felt that a thorough scientific study should be made of this whole question, using materials collected from all countries and representing different points of view, that the problem might be attacked in a really intelligent manner.

The Enlarged Meeting of the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon considered the Jerusalem Findings at its Madras meeting in late December and early January of 1928-29, and issued the following Findings for India :

"(a) *Need of financial help.*—The Church as a whole in India is fully conscious of and grateful for the self-sacrificing offerings of those older churches of other countries which have made possible the preaching of the gospel in this land and led to the founding of churches of believers here. The field is so vast; so much of it is not yet touched; and the organized Churches are still so comparatively small and weak; that the time is not yet in sight when there will not be almost unlimited opportunity for the help of the older churches.

(b) *Progress in self-support.*—While this is true, we are thankful to record that great advance has been made on all sides in this respect during the last ten years, and progress is continuous. There are now large areas of country in which the pastoral ministrations of the Church are independent of outside financial aid; and where considerable contributions are made to the needs of the church as a whole and to its missionary activities.

(c) *Its stages.*—The first stage to be aimed at by Christian bodies has already been indicated. It is that all organized congregations, whether

¹ *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, vol. iii, pp. 210-11

in town or country, should as soon as possible become financially independent, both paying for their ministry and current expenses and meeting the rightful claims upon them of the whole work of the church alike for edification and elementary education.

There will no doubt, always be some individual congregations, as in other lands, which, either by their isolation or by their economic status, will need to be helped from outside sources, local or otherwise. The work of evangelism in areas where the younger Church is in control may be carried on independently by that Church or with financial assistance from the older Church; or may be conducted by the two in co-operation. Newer communities, not ripe for organization, must in the nature of things be helped for a time; and these, in areas where evangelization is rapid, will for some time be more than the settled congregations can make themselves entirely responsible for; but they must be encouraged (by means which will vary with the place and particular Church organization) to advance towards financial independence.

But mere self-support should never be the final aim, and the duty and privilege of stewardship and of giving for the needs of others should not be postponed till such financial independence is reached, but should be taught from the very beginning.

(d) *Financial partnership.*—In general it should be an accepted principle, in the relation between the younger and the older churches, that the older church, whose efforts have led to the foundation of the younger, should not hold itself relieved of all responsibility to help after the time when the younger Church is organically equipped. In all cases where financial help is received from the older

churches of the West for the development of Christian activities in India, such funds should be so administered that the self-respect, self-reliance and initiative of the Churches in India is not destroyed, and the younger churches should be taken into full partnership, in determining the policy and administration of such funds."

The Council did not feel that the church would be ready for many years to finance large educational, medical, industrial and publishing institutions which are closely related to and serving the church.

"We cannot shut our eyes," continue the Findings, "to the fact that there are many and large areas in this country where the poverty of the people who have been gathered into the church, or the scattered nature of little flocks, makes their arrival at financial independence still exceedingly difficult.

"The experience of the past shows that to attain a more rapid advance, we must look first of all to a deepening of the spiritual life as the only real basis for that greater self-sacrifice which will make natural and inevitable the desire to give and to serve."

8. *The problem of self-propagation.*—There are various views upon the subject of self-propagation. One is that the mission should be responsible for evangelization and the church for the spiritual development of its own membership. Another view is that the church should be responsible for extending itself, and the mission should devote its attention to education, medical work, social work and such other activities as may assist the general purposes of the church. A third view is that the mission should do evangelistic work, but should confine itself to the opening up of new fields. Still another view is that the church and mission should co-operate, perhaps dividing the field, but each aiding and supplementing the work of the other. In general

practice the work of extension is carried on co-operatively. In some districts the church leans very heavily upon the mission, and in others it both accepts and carries out its own responsibilities. Both the South India United Church and the United Church of Northern India have their own evangelistic committees and are encouraging the local churches to renewed evangelistic effort. The actual work done depends upon the leadership and spiritual condition of the local church, but progress is being registered.

One can question whether the rank and file of the church, particularly the second generation of Christians, are as alert to the propagation of their faith as to maintaining a Christian social group—which in many instances almost approximates a caste. But this is not strictly an Indian problem. Many churches in other countries more nearly approximate social clubs than power houses.

The real task confronting the Indian church is to be such a practical demonstration of Christianity, that it will inevitably attract men's attention. That day is not yet at hand. A dogmatic theology coupled with a restricted social outlook, has not commended the Christian church to the general approval of educated non-Christians. It will only be as the church loses herself in outstanding devoted service that she will really find herself, and bear convincing witness to those who are without.

9. *The problem of the relation of institutions to the church.*—In the course of their history missions have not only been instrumental in establishing churches, but also in founding and maintaining schools, hospitals, and other institutions, the cost of whose maintenance is far in excess of the financial resources of the Indian church. The question

naturally arises as to whether these institutions should be supported by the church. Does the simple fact that missions have established these institutions, carry with it the implication that the church must maintain them? Would the Indian church if left to itself, establish such institutions of its own? Opinions differ. Some regard primary education as the function of the church. Others hold it to be the function of the government. All agree that in the present state of the Indian church, the church cannot support colleges and hospitals. The question then arises as to whether the church should control these institutions, in order that they may be more intimately related to the life and people of India.

The Jerusalem Conference Statement recommends that "educational, medical, industrial, publishing and other institutions which are necessary to the life and ministry of the churches should be so related to them as to encourage them to assume responsible care and control. Similarly, institutions serving the Christian community more generally should relate themselves, as early as possible, to the indigenous Christian community, with a view to its assuming ultimately the responsibility for these institutions.

"In order to serve their purpose effectively, some of these institutions have necessarily been developed on such a scale as to make it exceedingly difficult for the younger churches to undertake full financial responsibility for them at an early date, thus requiring the continued support of the older churches.

"In order, however, that the younger churches may more rapidly take over these institutions, all matters affecting their major policies and problems of administration, maintenance and future

development should be decided only after joint consideration."¹

The National Christian Council of India endorsed the Jerusalem Findings, but expressed the opinion that many of these institutions are on a scale which the Indian church "cannot hope to be able to finance or staff without aid for many years to come." The council felt, however, that the Christian community should be intimately associated with the control of such institutions: the actual arrangements for control to vary with the stage of development of the church concerned and its ecclesiastical constitution. Three possible methods were suggested—

(a) a joint body composed of representatives of mission and church.

(b) special boards or committees on which the church has representation.

(c) a special board which is closely related to the church, but on which the church need not of necessity have representation.

If actual transfer to the church is contemplated, the time of transfer will have to be mutually settled by the agencies concerned. The council recommended the making of periodical surveys, which might stimulate the church or mission where transfer seems unduly delayed.²

10. *The problem of making necessary adjustments with the mission organization.*—As indicated in the preceding chapter, the personal element is an important factor in the process of devolution. The actual working out of the various stages of transfer requires sympathetic thought on the part of both church and mission. Too much impatience

¹ *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, vol. viii, p. 212.

² *Report of the Enlarged Meeting of the National Christian Council, Madras, 1928-29*, pp. 47ff.

or a tendency to hasty criticism can wreck the best conceived scheme of transfer. Leaders of both church and mission recognise the problem, and are attempting to meet the situation in an intelligent manner.

11. *The problem of helping the church membership to realize its Indian heritage.*—The charge is often brought against Christianity that it is a denationalizing influence, cutting the convert off from his own national heritage. Thoughtful Indian leaders are determined that this condition may no longer exist, but that the best of the Indian heritage may enrich the Christian church. They desire that Indian Christians may be Indian as well as Christian. It is their wish that the Indian Christian may claim every good thing which has entered into the making of India as his own. They would have him familiar with India's religious and philosophical heritage. They would have him know of India's contribution to literature, to science and to the arts. They would have him proud of India's past, interested in India's present and hopeful of India's future. It is a matter of pride that a Christian agency—the Literature Department of the National Y.M.C.A.—has done so much to reveal the best in Indian life. An Indian church which knows, and rejoices in its Indian cultural heritage, has a most significant background for its Christian contribution. It is an Indian church alone which can commend itself to the heart of India.

Though this chapter has dealt almost entirely with problems, the church in India is a going concern and is daily growing stronger. If the Indian church has its mass of illiterate members, it also has, and has had, men of spiritual power and men who have profoundly influenced Indian

life and thought. It has had its Krishna Mohun Banerji, its Lal Behari Day, its Nilakanta Goreh, its Kali Charan Banerjea, its Pandita Ramabai, its Narayan Vaman Tilak, its K. T. Paul and many others. It has its present-day leaders, filling acceptably their posts of high responsibility. What these leaders have done, others can do. They are a prophecy of what the Indian church can be, and what in the fullness of time, it shall be.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is it possible to talk about an "indigenous" Christian church in India?
2. Can the life of the church express itself adequately when the church is controlled from the outside?
3. How can missionaries encourage the spirit of independence within the church? Should they be pastors of churches? Should they serve on church committees?
4. How can the spirit of exclusiveness—the "we Christians" idea—be remedied? If Christians are a different people, should the difference be one of name, or of character and outlook?
5. Should a non-Christian who wants to follow the way of Christ join the Christian church?
6. Should the standard of church admission be a consistently high one, or should the church be regarded in the light of a school? Should a higher standard prevail abroad than in the church at home?
7. Is intellectual assent to creeds (rarely understood) an adequate prerequisite to church membership?
8. How can self-support best be encouraged?
9. Should missions supply pastors to churches unable to support them in whole or in part?
10. If so, should missions pay higher salaries to such pastors than the local church can reasonably hope to pay?

11. Should missions erect church buildings for local congregations?

12. What do you think of the statement that "An Indian can afford to be a Hindu or a Muslim, but needs outside help to be a Christian."

13. Must Indian churches be built and conducted on Western lines?

14. Is there an "Indian" and "Western" way of worship? Should there be an insistence upon conformity in worship?

15. The intellectual standard of Indian church leadership is low. In the long run, which line of missionary effort gives promise of greater usefulness to the church: intensive work to raise the intellectual level of the leaders, or the attempt to win new Christians—many of whom will never receive anything approaching an adequate religious education? Is there any other way out?

16. Can lay leadership be utilized more extensively than it is at present?

17. The theology of the Indian church is almost wholly that of a past generation. Can a modern theology be introduced without an outbreak of theological strife? Should an already weak church preserve an outward appearance of harmony at any price? Is there a constructive solution to this problem?

18. What is the relation of doctrine to Christianity? Is conformity to type more to be prized than intellectual activity? Is heresy the greatest danger that confronts the Christian Church?

19. Is the task of the church that of cultivating its own inner religious life, or should it take an interest in public questions? Under what circumstances can a minority group speak authoritatively upon public questions?

20. What should be the attitude of missions to independent Christian activity? Should they encourage Christian work originating outside the Christian church? Should they turn over work to independent organizations or to the church alone?

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CHAPTER V

THE CONCEPTION OF THE CHRISTIAN TASK BROADENS : RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

To understand the village is to understand India, for the life of India is to a very large extent the life of the village. The average Hindu is touched by three major influences : his family, his caste, and his village. The joint family orders the immediate details of every-day living. The caste provides certain religious and social sanctions. The village seems to develop a feeling of intense loyalty—so lasting that a man who has been absent from the family home for many years will speak with pride of “my village,” and will welcome a fellow-villager as a brother.

The majority of the inhabitants of the villages are agriculturists—owners or cultivators of small fields. There are a few village artisans, but the great bulk of the population attempt to wrest their living from the soil. The fields are generally small—plots which have been divided and sub-divided until they have long since ceased to serve as profitable units of production. Furthermore, a single land owner may have a small plot here, another plot there, and a third somewhere else : each plot too small to make it worthwhile to put in a well or to introduce other improvements, yet were the three plots in one place they might be worked profitably and cultivated according to improved methods. Under the joint family system, the members of the household work the family lands together and all share in the product. Needless to

say, a small field which will scarce support one man in comfort, cannot provide very much above the starvation level for children and children's children. A certain number of the villagers migrate to the city in search of work, but the city offers so few opportunities in comparison with the need that the problem of unemployment is scarcely touched. The heart of India's economic problem is a tremendous population seeking to live off the land and with no adequate outlet into industry.

The Indian villager is poor—so poor that an extremely narrow line separates him from debt. When the rains fail, when revenue demands come at an inopportune time, when sickness and death descend unexpectedly, the peasant has no other recourse than to borrow. The majority of the Indian agriculturists are in debt, and perhaps a majority of this number have little hope of paying their debts. The money-lender is an established institution of rural India, and his interest charges are limited only by what the traffic will bear.

The causes of India's poverty are varied. First of all, there is the unfavourable physical environment, which includes bad soil, an enervating climate and the failure of the monsoon. Thus in 1921, the census superintendent of the Bombay Presidency found the most common level of per capita income in rural localities to be about Rs. 75. Where the rainfall is uncertain and the soil poor, however, the income per head in a typical village has been calculated to be about Rs. 33-12 per annum, as against a necessary yearly expenditure of Rs. 44 for food and clothing.¹ When the monsoon fails altogether, the income is practically nil, and the

¹ Mukherji, R., *Rural Economy of India*, chap. iii.

agriculturist is forced to eke out a miserable existence until the next monsoon brings better times.

The second major cause of poverty has already been stated, viz., not enough steady work for the large number of people attempting to live on the soil.

Third, and very much publicized by the Indian Nationalists, is the foreign exploitation of India—a process of draining which has been carried out over a long period of years.

Follow then :

- (4) Over-population.
- (5) Malnutrition.
- (6) Unsanitary conditions of living, leading to sickness and inefficiency.
- (7) A social system which burdens one person with the support of a large family.
- (8) Illiteracy, and a defective system of education.
- (9) A certain resignation to fate.
- (10) Wasteful customs, such as marriage feasts.
- (11) Litigation.
- (12) An oversupply of an inferior grade of cattle.
- (13) Wastage of fertilizers through carelessness and through burning as fuel.
- (14) Losses to crops occasioned by animals and insect pests.
- (15) Too many beggars under the guise of "holy men."

Attempts have been made by both official and non-official agencies to cope with the problem of poverty. The Royal Commission on Agriculture, after an intensive study of the Indian situation, recently issued a most exhaustive list of recommendations looking toward the improvement of the lot of the cultivator. The opening of the Lloyd Barrage at Sukkur in January, 1932, marks a new

high in the effort of Government to deal with the uncertainties of the monsoon and to reclaim arid waste. In this single irrigation project there are 500,000 acres more than the total area of cultivation in the whole of Egypt. Three of the seven large canals are wider than the Suez Canal, the largest being over 205 miles long, with 2,300 miles of branches and distributaries.

Mr. Gandhi contributes the spinning wheel, not as a cure-all, but as a means of giving idle men and women employment in their spare time, and of increasing the purchasing power of the nation.

The Government has its department of agriculture, agricultural colleges and agricultural bias schools. It has its public health service—a nationwide net of hospitals and dispensaries. It has its famine relief organization, its Public Works Department and its Forestry service. It has taken a leading part in promoting the co-operative movement. It has its district officials, many of whom have taken a keen and intelligent interest in the problems of agriculture. The enthusiastic work of Mr. and Mrs. Brayne alone, though not above criticism, has stimulated rural improvement throughout the whole of India.

And missions too have played their part. Individual missionaries have for decades shown their interest in the agriculturist and his needs. About 30 years ago the agricultural expert first appeared upon the scene. At the present time almost every mission of size has at least one missionary who is a graduate of an agricultural college.

The first Christian organization to take up rural reconstruction in earnest was the Y.M.C.A. Speaking upon this point in a public address, the late Mr. K. T. Paul said : ‘It is a matter of much gratification that ‘Rural Reconstruction’ has after

all secured a place in the conscience and imagination of the people of India. Seventeen years ago, in 1913, when some of us were organizing the first Rural Centres in India ours was a cry in the wilderness. The very term 'Rural Reconstruction' was our coinage; today it is a slogan across our vast country. Scarcely a morning arrives when the newspaper which one opens has not something to say about rural reconstruction. We rejoice at this."¹

For the benefit of the uninitiated it may be said that the term "Rural Reconstruction" is a compliment to the Indian tradition of an ancient India in which the village was self-sufficient and so organized that it was able to serve every need of its own people. Hence today the appeal is not to build a new village, but to reconstruct the village so as to accord with tradition.

As far back as 1918, the National Christian Council recognized agricultural missions as an integral part of the missionary enterprise. The Fraser Educational Committee's Report of 1920 increased the interest in rural life. The Jerusalem Conference discussed the relationship between missions and rural problems and recommended that missions and churches should give special attention to rural needs, "in part because of the numbers of peoples involved . . . and the great issues of Christian civilization at stake; but also because the rural people live apart from the centres of wealth and population, their occupations differ in many respects from those of industrial and urban places, and many aspects of their institutional and group life have no counterpart in the city."²

¹ Buttersfield, Kenyon L., *The Christian Mission in Rural India, Report and Recommendations*, p. 40.

² *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, Vol. vi, p. 288.

As a method of approach, the Council stated that the only practicable way is to select a certain number of demonstration centres in which to do intensive work that may be a pattern for much wider areas.

The objectives of such rural work should be :

- “ (1) The development of Christian character, Christian fellowship and Christian service.
- (2) Healthy living in a healthful environment.
- (3) The effective cultivation of the physical resources necessary to the food supply and the sound economic development of people in villages and in the open country.
- (4) The improvement of family life through a knowledge of such home activities as the care of children, food, sleeping facilities, sanitation and all that centres about the life of women and children.
- (5) A social attitude toward neighbours which makes possible sincere co-operation despite obstacles of religion, nationality, race, colour or language.
- (6) The constant re-creation of personality—physical, mental and spiritual—which may be gained not only from a sound use of leisure time, but from an appreciation of the beautiful, the good and the inspiring in nature and in humanity.””

The Council recommended that missions should seek to utilize all the available agencies within the community which might be useful in community development, whether Christian or non-Christian. Such agencies would be the home, religious organizations, the school, voluntary economic and social organizations and the Government.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

India heard the message of the Jerusalem Conference and felt impelled to action. In December, 1928, an all-India Rural Workers' Conference was held at Coimbatore and the Jerusalem Findings regarding rural life were both endorsed and commended to the National Christian Council for action.

The Conference called upon the Indian church to broaden its conception of function and to break down the time-honoured barrier dividing sacred from secular. Worship and religious teaching are of high importance, but the teaching must also find expression in the life of the community.

In November 1929, at the joint invitation of the International Missionary Council and the National Christian Council, Dr. Kenyon L. Butterfield arrived in India to study the rural problem. From November to May, Dr. Butterfield travelled about the country, covering some 16,000 miles, holding conferences, observing rural work, and engaging in group and private interviews both with Christians and non-Christians.

The principal conferences were held at Guntur, Madras, Asansol, Lahore and Poona. The Guntur Conference (December 1929) laid down the principle, so uncommon in Christian work in India, that the mission is to work for the improvement of the *whole* village, and not simply the Christian section of it. The Madras Conference (February 1930) recommended the setting up of centres for the purpose of demonstration and for study of the rural problem. It recorded as its conviction, however, that "the distinctive function of missions is to form Christ-like character." The bulk of the burden of welfare work must fall upon the State. The Asansol Conference (March 1930) emphasized especially co-operation and medical work, suggesting that women trained in health and maternity work be

located in the villages, and that more use should be made of travelling dispensaries working out from centralized medical institutions. This Conference also urged that church and mission agencies should place new emphasis upon adult education. The Lahore Conference stressed the primacy of evangelism in any programme of reconstruction. The re-birth of society is dependent upon the re-birth of its individual members. The Conference also felt that more attention should be paid to the subject of woman in the home. In April 1930, an All-India Conference on Rural Work was convened in Poona by the executive committee of the National Christian Council. The purpose of this meeting was to attempt to bring together the varying opinions upon the subject of Rural Reconstruction. This Conference did a very able piece of work.

It defined a Rural Reconstruction Unit as "a group of contiguous villages, perhaps 10 to 15 in number, in which as full a programme as possible of rural reconstruction service shall be made available to the people. All agencies for educational, health, economic and social progress will be urged to pool their efforts through some form of community council in an attempt to get the people to co-operate in building a new type of Indian rural community. The church must lead this endeavour to make the enterprise thoroughly Christian in spirit."¹

The Conference recommended that each mission in India should start at least one centre as soon as practicable. Though the church should be at the centre of the movement as its dynamic, it should also co-operate with all other agencies for rural welfare.

¹ Report of a Conference on Rural Work, Poona, April 13-16, 1930.

Further recommendations dealt with village education, adult education, the woman and the home, health service, co-operative societies and the training of leadership.

Mr. Butterfield's Report, published late in 1930, incorporated the suggestions of the various conferences and laid down a programme for rural reconstruction in India.

The Report states that "9/10 of the missionary work in India is done on behalf of 1/10 of the people—meaning that the overwhelming emphasis, so far as the immediate activities of the missionary personnel are concerned, is with the people of the towns and cities. In 1928, 1/6 of the whole missionary force in India was concentrated in 10 large towns."¹

"There can be no doubt," says Mr. Butterfield, "that evangelism is the primary concern of the Christian enterprise in India. But it should in the best sense embrace all the work of the Christian enterprise. Of course this idea implies agreement as to a very wide scope for the definition of the Christian message. It is 'an inclusive evangelism.' Every activity must be spiritualized and truly Christianized. Evangelism is far broader than preaching. There is also the evangelism of service. Perhaps more important than anything else is the message that is carried by the Christ-like life of those who bear the name of Christian. The preacher must proclaim an evangel as broad as all the needs of the villager, and as inclusive as the range of impact of the peculiar Christian message upon all aspects of personal and corporate life. The undergirding of the task of strengthening village work lies in such a definition of the gospel

¹ Butterfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44.

as gives just as much meaning, significance, purpose and spiritual content to the ministry of healing and the service of economic relief as to the more specialized traditional religious work. Any type of service which will meet the needs of the villager must be thought of as integral in the Christian enterprise and justified as a part of the Christian message."¹

Dr. Butterfield proposes 10 types of service for rural India, to be undertaken as the programme of missions, but as soon as possible to be made the programme of the Indian Church. They are :

- (1) Proclaiming the Christian message by preaching, friendship and helpful service at any point of need.
- (2) Religious education, both for Christians and non-Christians.
- (3) Village schools, with their emphasis upon rural life.
- (4) The ministry of healing.
- (5) Economic and social relief.
- (6) Play and recreation.
- (7) Help for home-makers.
- (8) Mass education.
- (9) Rural organization, i.e., the attempt to correlate the agencies and forces that may be used in the development of rural India.
- (10) The training of leaders.²

The Report advises the adoption of the idea of the Rural Reconstruction Unit as defined by the Poona Conference, and calls attention to a few major features of the centralized plan. It regards the community school as the nucleus of the rural reconstruction unit—a central rural vernacular

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

middle school for boys and girls, shaping its curriculum to meet the needs of village life. Co-operation will occupy a leading place in the scheme. There will be emphasis upon home industries, upon the improvement of agriculture, upon preventive medicine, play and recreation, and adult education. The church will be the driving force behind the unit, but it will not attempt to do it all. It will seek the aid of schools, of village *panchayats*, of co-operative societies and other indigenous voluntary organizations; and it will also seek the aid of such government departments as agriculture, education, health, veterinary and forestry, as well as the district and *taluk* boards.¹

The minimum requirements for organizing a rural reconstruction unit may be put somewhat as follows :

- (1) The selection of a group of villages as the area of the unit.
- (2) Choosing a centre for the unit.
- (3) Organizing a community council from among the real leaders of the group of villages.
- (4) Selecting at least a part-time secretary for the unit.
- (5) Encouraging co-operative societies and government departments to do intensive work in the unit.
- (6) Strengthening evangelistic work and religious education through concentrated effort and better supervision.
- (7) Strengthening village schools and as soon as practicable organizing a real community school.

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 68-75.

- (8) Extending the facilities of available hospitals and dispensaries.
- (9) Instituting adult education on as wide a front as possible.¹

The Nagpur Meeting of the National Christian Council (December 1930) gave its first attention to the subject of rural reconstruction. "It is our considered judgment," say the Resolutions, "that the creation of Rural Reconstruction Units having their roots in the great human interests of the church, the school, the home, the hospital and the bank, and reaching out in the spirit of Christ through co-operation to serve the religious, educational, medical, social and economic needs of all the rural people, should be the united policy of missions and churches and that the National Christian Council should do everything in its power to further such a policy.

2. ". . . We consider the training of leaders a fundamental necessity in any adequate scheme of rural reconstruction, and while emphasizing the value of the theological seminary and the normal training school as admirable training grounds, the National Christian Council should explore the possibility of organizing one or more centres on a co-operative basis, where the full programme of service required for Rural Reconstruction Units could be explained and demonstrated."

The Council felt that there should be full publicity both in India and the churches abroad, that all might come to understand the rural life of India, and the opportunity for Christian service in rural areas.²

Since the Nagpur meeting, various missions have taken the preliminary steps of organization, and

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

² *National Christian Council Review*, February, 1931.

there is every reason to believe that this constructive approach to India's rural problem will soon become an integral part of the Christian missionary enterprise in India.

As indicated above, the rural centres of the Y.M.C.A. are the outstanding demonstration centres in India today. At Ramanathapuram, Coimbatore, work is carried on under four heads : (a) co-operative work; (b) agriculture and cottage industries; (c) adult education; (d) civic work.

(a) *Co-operative work*.—There are 38 co-operative societies in the Coimbatore Union, all within 8 miles of the centre. Loans are given for the redemption of prior debts incurred at high rates of interest (up to 24 per cent), and for improving and reclaiming land, purchasing bullocks and for making and repairing wells and houses. The only security offered for most of the loans is the character of the individual. New members have sometimes found it hard to understand that the co-operative society is not simply another money lender, but that each member is a lender to himself as a member of the society. The Coimbatore societies have cut across communal groupings and have built up a new grouping on the basis of self-help and mutual help of those having economic needs. The conduct of the affairs of the societies has proven itself to be good training in democratic government. Certain societies have carried the co-operative spirit into civic work, maintaining schools, dispensaries and reading rooms and working together to improve the sanitation of the villages.

(b) *Agriculture and cottage industries*.—Agricultural demonstrations are held in the villages surrounding the centre. There is continuous propaganda regarding the use of fertilizers, better seeds

and improved implements. Poultry raising has been introduced as a cottage industry and poultry exhibitions are held in the neighbouring villages. The centre undertakes to sell eggs for those co-operating in the movement.

Hand spinning and weaving were given a trial and the villagers instructed, but the cotton mills in the neighbourhood paid higher wages than could be earned at home and so the experiment was discontinued. The people are taught to produce indigenous dyes from leaves, roots, barks, fruits, etc. This is not a commercial proposition, but simply for the help of the people themselves. Bee-keeping was introduced as a new industry in 1925. Weekly needle-work classes for women are also held.

(c) *Adult education*.—Adult education is carried on through night schools, libraries, exhibitions, lantern lectures, dramatic performances, music classes, athletics and scouting.

(d) *Civic work*.—The civic activities of the centre include such non-economic services as promoting schools, building better roads, improving the water supply, bettering sanitary conditions, extending library facilities and introducing programmes of recreation.

The Y.M.C.A. Rural Reconstruction Centre at Areakode in the Malabar District has introduced such cottage industries as making cocoanut husks into coir products, and basket making. An industrial school teaches weaving, rattan work and carpentry. The centre co-operates with the Department of Agriculture in spreading propaganda for better agriculture. The co-operative society has made loans for such purposes as house repairs, land improvement, purchase of seeds and cattle, payment of labour and rent, to boatmen for the hire and purchase of boats, etc. Attention has also

been paid to adult education, sanitation and medical relief.

The Y.M.C.A. centre at Indukurpet, near Nellore, carries on intensive work in 4 villages, along the same general lines as above.

The Y.M.C.A. centre at Martandam, South Travancore, has established about 40 co-operative societies since 1915. It demonstrates poultry keeping, bee keeping and weaving. It concerns itself with animal husbandry and the improvement of agriculture. It gives special attention to the marketing of indigenous products. It carries on health propaganda and adult education. It holds an annual fair for the encouragement of better methods and better products. It sponsors a short summer school, looking toward the improvement of village life. The Martandam Centre extends itself through the numerous branch Y.M.C.A.'s in Travancore, and is thus exerting an influence throughout a wide area.¹

Paraphrasing the language of the Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, it is centres such as these that are breaking the inhibition on the will to live better, by furnishing a strong central driving force that encourages enthusiasm, develops public spirit, and provides suitable material for active workers in their campaign in favour of the improvement of village life.

We shall consider some of the more important educational experiments when we deal with the subject of education. Suffice it to mention here but a few of the institutions which are doing outstanding work in the field of rural education, such as Moga, the rural school at Bhimpur, Bengal, the Allahabad Agricultural Institute, the Agricultural

¹ Cf., Holt, Arthur E., Unpublished Survey of the Work of the Y.M.C.A. in India, Burma and Ceylon.

Institute at Katpadi, South India, the Girls' School at Chittoor, Madras, the agricultural bias schools training in agriculture and village industries at Sangli, Manmad and Vadala in the Bombay Presidency, the Vellore, Dornakal and Moradabad schools, and the various other schools which are listed in Miss Van Doren's *Fourteen Experiments in Rural Education*.

The ideal of serving villages has also found its way into the high schools and colleges. Thus the boys in the Bishnupur School, near Calcutta, formed their own social service league for the purpose of working in the villages near Bishnupur. The first village the boys tried to enter was unfriendly and so they transferred their efforts to another village, where they managed to form a branch league. They visited this village periodically, giving lantern lectures on such subjects as impure water and the prevention of malaria, and rendering such service as boys could render. They cleared the village path and cleaned the village tank. Later on they started a night school for the men and boys of three surrounding villages, the boys themselves doing teaching until the job became too big and necessitated the hiring of a regular teacher. The boys still, however, continued to supervise the school, and have at intervals organized entertainments for the pupils and their friends. They are learning the joy of service not from books, but through actual experience.¹

Another experiment along this line is an attempt in the Lucknow Christian College to enlist college students in rural service. The work began several years ago, when five or six students, after

¹ Chatterji, S.K. "Social Service in the South Villages of Bengal," *Village Teachers' Journal*, January, 1930.

considerable persuasion, consented to make "just one trip" to a neighbouring village. In this village the boys found the headman much concerned over the illness of his child. Then several other people told of sickness and death within their families. It soon became clear that malaria was the enemy. The boys then began to tell the men of the village how to prevent malaria. They pointed out the filthy drains and breeding places of mosquitoes, and before leaving took off their coats and helped to clean every drain. The next day they returned to the village, taking medicine for those who were ill. The original group soon became enthusiastic propagandists and within two months more than 200 students expressed the desire to be enrolled for rural service. Six groups were formed, and it was proposed to make at least one trip each week to a neighbouring village. Three of the groups carried on their work regularly throughout the school year. A landlord, hearing of what was being done in other villages, invited the boys to come to his village, where good work has been done. The groups are kept stimulated at the college by meeting each week for a study of village problems, and discussing problems arising out of their own work.¹

The importance of this work does not lie in the few villages that are being helped. It lies in the new attitude toward rural problems which is developing on the part of the students. When educated men and women really become interested in the village and its problems it will mean much for the future of India.

Various mission hospitals are concerning themselves with village health. The Women's Medical

¹ Ballenger, M. G., "Enlisting College Students in Rural Service", *Moga Journal*, July, 1930.

College of Vellore, for example, maintains a "Roadside Dispensary." For over a decade Dr. Ida Scudder, assisted by her students, has been making a weekly run over a road from Vellore to a point 18 miles distant. Stops are made every few miles under the trees near the villages for the treatment of patients. Recently a dispensary building has been established at the terminal town, where a medical assistant is stationed and where she conducts a daily dispensary. In a single day's trip, from 75 to 100 patients may be seen and treated. Patients needing, and willing to accept hospitalization, are carried to the hospital as the motor returns.¹

The American Marathi Mission has recently recognized its responsibility for the health of the village people by planning a fully equipped hospital for the little village of Vadala, which, it is expected, will be of service to the rural population for miles around.

Individual missions and missionaries have also been active in the field of co-operation. The Y.M.C.A. as early as 1916, organized a Central Co-operative Board in Madras to assist in the development of the co-operative movement. It was felt that loans should not depend upon property alone, but also upon character, and that Christians had a real contribution to make in this field. The rural secretaries of the Y.M.C.A. began to train the village leaders in the principles of co-operation, leading them to assume responsibility for granting or refusing loans to the residents of the village. In the years that the plan has been in operation, it is reported that the central bank has never lost a rupee in its dealings with local banks. This

¹ *The Christian Task in India*, p. 137.

certainly is a tribute to interested personal supervision.

In the Jalna District of the Bombay Presidency, the United Free Church Mission was a pioneer in co-operative work,—a work growing to such proportions as to require the full-time service of a missionary.

These co-operative societies are not for Christians alone,—men of all religious faiths may become members. Of their importance Mr. Sam Higginbotham says, "Anyone familiar with rural India knows that Christianity has no greater handmaid than the co-operative society. There is not one teaching in these societies that does not come from the teaching of Jesus: mutual help, goodwill, trust, absence of suspicion."¹ The principal drawback to the co-operative movement in India is the widespread assumption that money-lending is the main, if not the only purpose of co-operation. As a matter of fact, co-operation is a far wider movement. While helping the individual to improve his economic status, it also trains him in honesty, promptness, thrift, co-operative deliberation, sympathetic consideration of the problems of others, and generates in him attitudes of hope and courage, as opposed to the widespread attitude of resignation to fate. It is an integral part in any programme of reconstruction.

Though the above materials are but an outline sketch, they demonstrate that Indian missions are alert to the rural problem. In India today a new rural civilization is in process of building and the Christian Church is by no means the least important factor in its development.

¹ *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, Vol. vi, p. 84.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is rural reconstruction a legitimate part of the missionary enterprise? Dr. Butterfield has said that "the preacher must proclaim an evangel as broad as all the needs of the villager." Is this statement correct?
2. The Madras Rural Workers' Conference (February, 1930) stated that "the development of character and not the spreading of comfort" must remain the primary goal of missions. Are these two things incompatible? Has the "spreading of comfort" any influence upon the "development of character"?
3. Should missions work for the economic improvement of the whole village, or for the Christian section of it alone?
4. Should Christians be taken apart and settled in agricultural colonies?
5. Should missions seek for and accept the co-operation of non-Christian agencies in any programme of rural reconstruction?
6. Should a programme of rural reconstruction be imposed from without or grow up from within? Can an awareness of need be stimulated legitimately?
7. Is Dr. Butterfield's scheme for rural reconstruction a practicable one? Does it involve any change in outlook on the part of missions?
8. Is an arts college and theological education an adequate preparation for the rural missionary?
9. Christianity holds up an ideal of unselfish service. Economic necessity virtually compels the educated Christian to accept the position which promises the highest financial reward. Is there any way out?
10. Is it possible to shift the mind-set of the educated person from the city to the village?
11. How can missions best encourage research in rural economic problems? How can the vast amount of information in the hands of rural missionaries best be collected and utilized?
12. What are the objectives of the rural work of missions?

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CHAPTER VI

THE CONCEPTION OF THE CHRISTIAN TASK BROADENS : SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WELFARE

INDIA is, and always has been, largely an agricultural country, with the village at the centre. During the first half of the nineteenth century communication was poor. Good roads were few and far between. A heavy monsoon rendered parts of the country almost impassable. Failure of the monsoon too often resulted in famine, because of the difficulty of transporting food from one section of the country to the other. Transportation costs were high and there was very little trade.

Such industry as there was depended in large measure upon the nature of the few sizeable towns. Thus a pilgrimage centre such as Benares, specialized in making sacred vessels of brass and copper. A court town specialized in luxury articles—fine cloth, jewelry, delicate carving. A limited number of towns owed their commercial importance to their strategic locations near busy cross-roads or navigable rivers.

The village of this period was practically an independent unit. The principal artisans were village servants and there was little outside competition.

With the improvement of transportation after 1850, both India's foreign and domestic trade began to expand. The Suez Canal brought England nearer, and hard roads and the building of the first railways encouraged domestic trade.

The importation of European products had a direct effect upon Indian industry. Machine cotton began to displace home spinning and weaving. The village artisans began to feel the effect of outside competition. Village workers began to migrate to the larger towns, and craftsmen displaced in the towns sought to turn to agriculture. The number of factories began to increase until by 1929 India had textile mills employing 696,412 workers, mines employing 250,272 workers, engineering and metal shops employing 315,000 workers, and brick factories, flour and rice mills, printing presses, oil mills, sugar factories, saw mills, paper mills, etc., employing in all approximately two million workers.

The two most important manufacturing centres in India are Bombay and Calcutta. Bombay has the advantage of a splendid harbour and good railway connections with the interior. The port facilities of Calcutta do not equal those of Bombay, but Calcutta has the double advantage of being on a great river system and in close proximity to the coal fields—the latter advantage being offset in part by the excellent supply of electrical power available to Bombay industry. The principal industry of Calcutta is jute, an industry largely owned and controlled by Europeans. Bombay's principal industry of cotton is largely Indian owned. Other important cotton centres are Ahmedabad, Sholapur, Nagpur, Delhi and Cawnpore.

Although attempts to manufacture iron and steel began almost a hundred years ago, it was not until the twentieth century that the industry became really established. Pig iron production has risen from 35,000 tons in 1900 to 957,000 tons in 1927, while steel production in the latter year reached 530,000 tons. It is interesting to note that the

importation of foreign iron and coal is steadily decreasing.

Indian coal is mined chiefly in Bihar and Orissa and Bengal. In 1929 the average number of daily workers in the coal mines was 165,658 and 22,308,174 tons of coal were produced. The Jharia coal field (Bihar and Orissa) turns out more than one-half of the total coal mined in British India. The supply is plentiful and will meet ordinary needs for many years to come.

The principal gold mines are the Kolar goldfields in Mysore State, which in 1925 employed 19,347 workers. The railway workshops and the smaller industries are distributed throughout the country so as to meet existing need or to utilize in the best manner important natural advantages.

India is the world's leading exporter of tea, and in 1929 there were 789,000 acres of tea under cultivation, employing 930,472 workers. Assam has about 55 per cent of the total acreage, followed by Bengal and Southern India, with some 97,000 scattered acres in the Indian States, Northern India, and Bihar and Orissa.

The jute crop requires a rich, moist soil, which condition is well met in Eastern Bengal where the soil is renewed year after year by alluvial deposits left by the overflowing rivers. The crop requires considerable attention when young, but once it has gotten started it is quite easy to care for, the plants growing from six to ten feet in height. Before ripening, the stalks are cut, tied up in bundles and rotted in water for from two to three weeks until the fibre is loosened from the hard, central stalk. The jute is then removed from the water and the fibre stripped, washed and dried. The dried fibre is made up into bundles, baled, and sent on to Calcutta to the mills. In the mills the-

bales are opened, the fibre oiled and softened, carded and prepared for spinning. Both men and women are employed in the industry.

The cotton crop is grown in the drier sections of the country, the chief requirement being a moist soil and a light rainfall. In some sections the seed is sown broadcast and left practically alone until the time of the harvest, while in others it is sown in rows and carefully cultivated. The cotton plant ranges from two to four feet in height and requires from five to nine months to reach maturity. From the field the picked cotton is generally taken to the nearest cotton market, and from there to the ginning factories, where it is dumped in huge mounds while awaiting ginning. The ginned cotton is either pressed into bales for shipment to distant centres or carted unpressed to the neighbouring mills. Upon reaching the mills the bales are opened and the fibres loosened and prepared for carding. The carding engine begins the process of shaping the fibres into a porous band, called a sliver. The sliver is gradually refined until it becomes yarn for weaving. In the weaving mill the threads are sized, and the yarn finally attached to the loom. Then comes weaving, inspection, and the final preparation of the cloth for sale. In the cotton industry, as in jute, both men and women are employed.

The labour force for both the cotton and jute industries is drawn from the villages, and represents for the most part either agriculturists who go to the city for a time to supplement the family income, or village menials who go to the city in an endeavour to raise their social and economic status.

In his village the new immigrant has been a member of a group, hedged about with the

restrictions and sanctions of the joint family and caste. But as he leaves the village behind, the old sanctions are weakened. The joint family loses its hold and caste is no longer the dominating influence that it has been. If the worker is fortunate, he at once goes to relatives or friends who have come from the same village, and stays with them until he has gotten his bearings. If he has no friends or relatives, he wanders hither and yon, often making friends with people of loose character or people who use his impecunious position as a means of getting a hold upon him for their own future advantage.

Since few mills have employment officers, the chances of a man getting work are generally dependent upon his willingness to offer a bribe to the department jobber—a pernicious practice of which the better mills are now endeavouring to rid themselves. The jobber also acts as a money lender, giving the new worker an advance on his salary and thus gaining still further control over him. Friendless women seeking posts in the mills are in a particularly unenviable condition.

The housing of the workers varies in different centres. In the smaller centres where the land is plentiful, the problem is much different from that of the great cities. As representative of the up-country mill town one might cite Nagpur. In Nagpur there are two groups of mills employing about 13,000 workers. Some of the workers live in the more crowded areas near to the mills, while others live quite removed in collections of huts known as *bastis*. The huts in the *bastis* quite resemble the huts in the villages, and in many respects the life carried on is the life of the village. A few years ago the management of the Empress

Mills acquired a large plot of land adjoining the city. This plot has been laid out in small building lots with ample roads and open spaces. The mills have erected a number of small model houses and have encouraged building by loaning money at moderate rates. A considerable number of employees have taken advantage of the scheme, and the airy little houses, set in their attractive gardens, with private water and latrine accommodations, are a most pleasing picture to those familiar with industrial housing in other centres.

The drawback to the scheme is that by entering into the housing agreement the workmen virtually put themselves into the hands of the company—for better or for worse. It is only just to say that the management of the Empress Mills endeavours to deal fairly with its workers, but under less sympathetic management, the scheme is fraught with danger.

In the vicinity of Calcutta the workers either live in crowded bazars or in scattered *bastis*. The huts are generally erected wherever a bit of open land is available and of such materials as lie near at hand. In some cases private individuals build the huts and rent them. In other cases, the worker simply squats on untenanted land until compelled to move on. The huts are generally cheaply constructed and lack even the simplest sanitary provisions. Certain of the mills provide their own workers' housing, generally long lines of single-storied rooms, which are rented at relatively low rents. Some of the lines are scant improvement over the outside dwellings, but others contain quite satisfactory houses, constructed of brick, with tile roofs and stone floors, and having narrow verandahs. In the better lines there are also improved sanitary conditions with paved streets, flush sewers, a good

supply of water taps, and adequate latrine accommodations.

The city of Bombay has troubles of her own. Bombay being on an island, the amount of land available for housing is limited. In the early days of the mill industry the workers were crowded into dark and unsanitary private tenements, known as chawls. Periodic outbreaks of disease would remind the authorities that something must be done to improve conditions, but the good intention was generally dissipated in talk. The organization of the Bombay City Improvement Trust was Bombay's first attempt to get down to real business. The Improvement Trust mapped out the city and began a heroic programme of demolishing old houses, opening up new roads, and providing new quarters for the people displaced. The work of the Improvement Trust was later supplemented by that of the Development Directorate, the two organizations erecting in all a total of 312 chawls, providing a total of about 26,000 rooms. The ordinary chawl consists of 80 rooms, which means that 80 families, together with their boarders and dependents, are living in each building. Though the management endeavours to restrict the number of people occupying each room, the rule is very difficult to enforce, and so remains practically a dead letter. To villagers accustomed to the country, the great cement chawls hold out little attraction and many prefer to live in less sanitary and more crowded quarters, but quarters which seem a bit more human. In our own crowded section of Bombay I have counted no less than 16 different families living in one small open hall. It is no wonder that the streets of Bombay are nightly crowded with sleepers at all seasons of the year. And it is no wonder that the infant and childhood mortality of the city

reaches the high figure that it does reach. The constant wonder is how the workers manage to maintain as good health as they do.

From the labour standpoint the immigrant villager is an open question. Since he has not a working-class consciousness and has no tradition of taking pride in his work, he rarely exerts his best efforts, being content to "get by." He will quit his work on the slightest pretext, and being ignorant, he is a ready prey to unscrupulous agitators. He knows that if he fails in the city he can return to the village and manage in some way to pull on. The constant turnover of labour is a perplexing problem to the employer and militates against a highly finished product. On the other hand, a labour consciousness is developing. The labour unions, though at present passing through a troublesome period, are giving evidence of the development of a working class spirit. When the movement passes from the phase of agitation to the centering of its attention upon the improvement of the working group itself, there will be a big step forward.

The early industrial efforts in India were marked by the attempts of the employers to exploit their workers. Strange to say the first demand for the improvement of working conditions came from Manchester—the English workers being alarmed by the unfair competition resulting from the long hours and low wages prevalent in Indian industry.

In 1875 the Government of Bombay instituted an enquiry which revealed the employment of children of five and six years of age, long hours, and bad working conditions. But it was in 1881 that the Government of India passed the first Factory Act. By the terms of this Act no children under 7 were to be employed in factories and no child under

12 was to work for more than 9 hours. The Act was to apply to all establishments using power and employing 100 or more persons, but seasonal factories and tea, coffee and indigo plantations were exempted.

The Act of 1881 did not satisfy the reformers, but it was ten years later before the Act was amended to apply to factories employing not less than 50 persons, and at the option of the Local Governments 20 or more. The hours for children were reduced to seven, and the age for employing children was raised to nine. Other provisions related to the employment of women, holidays, and the regulation of conditions within the factories.

Abuses in regard to the employment of women and children and excessive hours of work led to the appointment of a Factory Commission in 1908, the recommendations of which were incorporated in the Factory Act of 1911. The International Labour Conference following the War resulted in still further changes, which were incorporated in the Indian Factory Act of 1922 and the amendments of 1926.

As the Factory Act now stands, a factory is an establishment using power and employing on any one day more than 19 persons, though the Provincial Governments are given the power to apply the Act to establishments employing 10 persons, regardless of whether power is used or not. The minimum age for employment is 12, and no child under 15 can be employed for more than 6 hours per day. Safeguards are provided to prevent a child from being employed in two factories at the same time. Hours of work are limited to 11 a day, with a maximum of 60 per week, with an hour rest interval and a holiday every ten days at

least. Women's work is regulated; sanitary and safety measures provided for; and penalties stipulated for the breach of the Act.

The chief factory inspector of each Province is responsible for the administration of the Act, but the inspectorate staff is so limited as to make any rigid inspection extremely difficult.

Although the standard of wages in the larger industries is more or less fixed, the employer has the power of making such fines and deductions as he chooses. Thus cuts may be made for irregularity of attendance, for carelessness, for misbehaviour, for spoiling of cloth, etc. There is no standardization of fines, hence the worker is at the mercy of the employer. In the cotton industry wages are generally paid but once a month, and that payment is made in the middle of the month following the month for which payment is due. This of course works a hardship upon the workers, and particularly upon the newly employed.

A certain amount of welfare work is conducted by the employers—some, as the work in the Empress Mills at Nagpur and the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills at Madras, being of considerable scope. But the situation in industry as a whole is such as to lead the British Trades Union Congress Delegation to India (1927-28) to declare :

Some of the things we saw being done impressed us favourably in the first instance. The provision for sports, including gymnastics, was quite good, particularly as there were no like facilities anywhere else. But as we probed deeper into matters we became convinced that under the cover of paternalism and benevolence many unjust conditions of work obtained, such as low wages, fines, etc., and that there was not really much, if anything, to be said in favour of employers practising welfare work as against

others who do not. . . . Our general conclusion on welfare work as at present carried on in India, is that it is a delusion and a snare.

The National Christian Council of India has long been interested in industrial conditions. In 1924, at the Council meeting in Waltair, it was resolved to inaugurate a study which would investigate the state of Indian industry, with the end in view of influencing public opinion, and holding up Christian standards for industry. The matter was favourably received by the Institute of Social and Religious Research in New York, and Miss M. Cecile Matheson, an English lady with wide experience in industrial investigations and welfare work, was appointed to undertake a two year study of Indian conditions. Associated with Miss Matheson were Miss Iris Wingate of the National Y.W.C.A. and Mr. Manohar Lall of the Y.M.C.A. social welfare centre at Nagpur. The study covered all sections of India and occupied the winters of 1927-28 and 1928-29.

Early in 1929 a Conference on Industrial Problems was held in Poona, under the auspices of the National Christian Council, to consider the implications of the material which was then in hand. At this Conference it was proposed :

- (1) That attempts should be made to amend the Factory Act so that
 - (a) a normal working week should be 55 hours, with a 10 hour day, seasonal industries to be considered an exception;
 - (b) no spell of work without a pause should be longer than five hours;
 - (c) multiple shifts should be abolished; and
 - (d) work places using power and employing 10 or more persons on any day in the year should be brought under the Act.

(2) That efforts should be made to press Government "to accept the principle that fines and deductions should be fair and reasonable, and not be a source of profit to the employer; that they should be recorded in a register, and that the Factory Inspector should have the right to inspect this register."

(3) That Government be urged to increase the inspectorate and that there be a woman inspector at least in each of the large industrial centres.

(4) That the Government of India should be pressed to ratify the Minimum Wage Convention, and that legislation along the lines suggested by the Convention be asked for without stressing the need of applying it to home trades.

(5) That efforts should be made to secure such legislation on maternity benefit as would satisfy as far as possible the Washington Convention.

(6) That efforts be made to secure legislation by which workmen could get at least 20 days' sick leave in a year, on doctor's certificate, on full or half pay.

It was agreed further that India needs an Industrial Welfare Society (on the lines of the one in England) to collect information and advise as to welfare matters, and that every effort should be made to promote the appointment of welfare or labour supervisors to undertake among other things—(a) direct engagement of labour; (b) property management of lines or chawls; (c) health, educational and recreational work—always safeguarding the direct access of the labourer to management.

It was finally "*Resolved*, that the Executive of the National Christian Council be requested to appoint a committee of the N.C.C. which shall work in co-operation with similar committees of the

Provincial Christian Councils, to have charge of industrial problems in their relation to the Christian Church and Christian missions. The duty of that committee shall be to bring to the attention of the church and of Christian missions the urgency of the call to the Christian forces in India to undertake new types of service in relation to the needs of the rapidly growing industrial population in this country, especially as these needs are presented in the report that has been prepared by the Industrial Survey Group of the N.C.C.¹

The Industrial Committee of the Bombay Representative Christian Council, meeting in Bombay a few months later, endorsed the proposals of the Poona Conference on Industrial Problems and added four points relating to the Bombay Presidency in particular, viz., that the right of peaceful picketing at the time of strikes must be affirmed; that facilities should be established on a permanent basis for impartial investigation and conciliation of labour disputes; that the law regarding child labour should be rigidly enforced; that the proposed maternity benefit legislation should be amended in certain particulars where it appears to militate against the interests of the women whom it is intended to serve.

This Committee expressed its belief that low wages and bad housing are the root causes of industrial discontent in Bombay, and that Government should be urged to take steps to introduce compulsory education in the industrial districts, as well as to help in providing opportunities for adult education.

Representatives of the Industrial Committee of the Bombay Representative Christian Council gave

¹ Matheson, M. Cecile, *Indian Industry*, pp. 178ff.

constructive oral evidence before the Royal Commission investigating labour and housing in India.

The Industrial Committee of the National Christian Council, meeting in Nagpur in December, 1930, after considering the various proposals made by Miss Matheson, decided to delay proposals for legislative action until after the Report of the Royal Commission and devoted its main attention "to the formulation of a scheme of welfare work which Christian agencies could undertake in urban and industrial areas; to the training of welfare workers, both men and women; and to the important question of how to get the churches and missions really interested in the problems of human welfare created by modern industrial developments in India."¹

The Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India (Whitley Commission) is a worthy document of some 500 pages, covering every phase of Indian labour. It is both more comprehensive and more far-sighted than the earlier survey sponsored by the National Christian Council, and will undoubtedly be used as a source book by the Christian agencies interested in social welfare. Among its 357 recommendations, the Commission recognizes the evils of the jobber system mentioned above, and recommends the direct engagement of labour. It recommends a 54 hour week, with a daily limit of 10 hours, and a spreadover not to exceed 13 hours. It recommends that the daily hours for children should be limited to 5, and that persons between the ages of 15 and 16 should not be employed as adults without a medical certificate of physical fitness. It deals with working conditions

¹ *National Christian Council Review*, February, 1931.

in factories : cleanliness, latrine facilities, temperature, humidification, safety, water, provision of crèches for children, provision of shelter for rest and refreshment, and inspection. It takes up the problem of seasonal factories—recommending a maximum limit of 11 hours a day and 60 a week. It considers the abuses in the smaller, unregulated factories and recommends the extension of the Factory Act to factories, without power machinery, employing 50 or more persons during any part of the year (this to meet abuses in such trades as rug-making and leather). It deals with mines, railroads, transport services, and public works. It outlines the procedure for setting up minimum wage-fixing machinery and recommends a further standardization of wages in the textile industry. It strongly favours the legislative limitation of fines and deductions. It recommends restricting the sale of liquor in industrial areas. It wrestles with the tangled problem of indebtedness, suggesting that the besetting of an industrial establishment for the recovery of debts should be made a cognizable offence. It recommends that employers should adopt a system of weekly wage payments, and that legislation should compel the payment of wages at intervals not exceeding 16 days. To further the health and welfare of the industrial worker the Committee recommends : an Indian Institute of Nutrition, the construction of sanitary markets, laws against the adulteration of foods, industrial health research, municipal health officers, public health acts, expert attack upon malaria, more women doctors for women in industry, child welfare centres and maternity clinics, and maternity benefit legislation—with a maximum benefit period of 4 weeks before and 4 weeks after childbirth. The Committee recommends improved industrial

housing, with legislation regarding the minimum standards in regard to floor and cubic space, ventilation and lighting. It urges provincial Town Planning Acts. It suggests the extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act to all workers in organized industry, whether their occupations are hazardous or not. It suggests certain changes in the Trade Unions Act, and measures for the settlement of industrial disputes. It deals with recruiting for the Assam tea plantations, suggesting the appointment of a Protector of Immigrants in Assam. It deals with the problem of repatriation from Assam, with plantation wages, health and welfare. It discusses the matter of labour legislation—Provincial and Central.¹

Some one has called the Report "The Magna Charta of Indian Labour," and it certainly goes far toward warranting this description. The Report will be a document for careful study for many years to come.

The Young Men's Christian Association has been the pioneer Christian agency engaged in social welfare work in India, its principal centres being in the cities of Nagpur and Bombay.

The Empress Mills in Nagpur employ about 8,800 workers. For somewhat over a decade the outside welfare work of the Empress Mills has been conducted by the Y.M.C.A., though financed by the mills. This work is carried on in 9 *bastis*, or living centres of the workers. The work started with night schools, each school serving as a rallying point for other activities. These activities include stereopticon lectures, lectures on such subjects as thrift, temperance and hygiene, concerts, occasional debates, excursions, cinema shows, athletics,

¹ *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, 1931.*

scouting, public health propaganda and free medical assistance. Classes for girls and women teach sewing, reading, singing, hygiene and home matters. Several adult discussion groups have been held in the *bastis* to consider vital topics of the day.

In 1925, the Empress Mills leased a 200 acre tract from Government for the purpose of creating a model village wherein each man can rent his own cottage. The plan calls for erecting about 1,500 workers' houses, together with schools, hospitals, etc. Each group of 28 cottages is to have an acre reserved for a playground in the centre. Each house is to stand in its own yard, and individual gardens are to be encouraged. The village will be provided with good roads and lighting. The management lays down certain minimum requirements for health and sanitation, but the people are encouraged to build their own houses in accordance with their own ideas.

Upwards of 100 houses have already been erected in the first section, less than one-half by the company and the remainder by the workers. The houses built by the company are sold to the workers on the instalment plan at less than cost. To the workers who desire to build, the mills loan money which is repaid, without interest, in small monthly instalments.

The actual carrying out of this scheme has for some years been in charge of a secretary of the Y.M.C.A.

The Bombay Y.M.C.A. began its welfare activities in the northern mill area of the city in 1925. The method of approach was that of play, followed by the opening of night schools. Other activities introduced were lantern lectures, first aid classes, sewing and health education for women, scouting,

music, drama, and personal services by the staff. In addition to the parent centre the Association has undertaken welfare work for the B.B. and C.I. Railway, the Bombay Municipality, and the Bombay Port Trust. All of these centres work along the established lines.

The Young Women's Christian Association first opened independent work in the Bombay mill area in November, 1928. This work is carried on in actual chawl rooms, meeting the women on their own ground, instead of in a building apart.

The activities of the centre include a dispensary, sewing classes for women and children, girls' clubs, public health lectures, a nursery school and a school for women. Considerable attention is paid to health propaganda through lectures, posters, and baby shows.

The mill area work of both the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. has been handicapped by strikes and communal riots. As has already been indicated, the Bombay mill worker is primarily a villager, who in time of trouble desires to return to his village. If he returns to the city he does not always go to the same chawl area or to work in the same mill. This coming and going of more or less transient workers is not conducive to consecutive, constructive work. It will still be a long period of time before the Bombay mill workers can be looked upon as a settled, permanent working group.

- The Nagpada Neighbourhood House of Bombay represents a pioneer attempt of Indian missions to carry on social settlement work in the city slums. Founded by the American Marathi Mission in 1927, the Neighbourhood House seeks to bring together men, women and children of all castes and creeds in a common programme of neighbourhood betterment. The settlement is open day and night.

supporting approximately 100 fixed weekly appointments. Located in one of the most congested regions in the world, the Nagpada Neighbourhood House saves the babies through its infant welfare centre and health visitation. It protects the mothers through its maternity clinics. It helps the sick through its dispensary. It keeps the children happy by supervised play. It provides clean recreation for boys and young men. It educates young and old through Urdu, Marathi and English night schools, its business classes, library and public lectures. It encourages self-expression through music and handwork classes and through debating and dramatic clubs. It entertains the entire family at cinema shows, concerts and dramatic performances. It assists the unemployed to find employment. It seeks to strengthen family life. It furthers inter-communal co-operation among the varied population groups of the neighbourhood. It strives to organize the latent idealism of the neighbourhood. Though but six years old the Neighbourhood House has behind it a solid record of achievement and has made a real place for itself in the section of the city in which it is located.

Neither the Indian church nor missions has as yet taken an active part in the leadership of the trade union movement. It is to be hoped and expected, however, that as the social consciousness of the church develops, young men will arise who will devote their talents to this important and growing movement. There is a tremendous need in India today for disinterested, intelligent labour leadership. The Christian Church has a real opportunity in this direction and one that should be grasped.

In the general field of social reform, Christianity has played a worthy part. India has had her own stalwart social reformers, but a large part of the

credit for the social awakening must be given to the influence of Christian missions. India herself recognizes this and is not slow to express her appreciation. Missions have worked for education, for the rights of women, and for the removal of untouchability. They have attempted to be free from a narrow communalism and to practise the ministry of reconciliation. They have fought prostitution, the opium evil, and the liquor traffic. Christian journalists have exerted an influence far beyond the immediate circulation of their papers. In the early days the missionary who advocated social change met with bitter opposition from the orthodox Hindu. Today the social ferment is working, and the church's opportunity in the future is only limited by the limits of her vision.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. To what extent should missions engage in active social work?
2. Should the social work of missions be ameliorative only? Does welfare work end with providing a few amenities for working people, or must it probe deeper?
3. Should missions attempt to influence social legislation?
4. Should the church and mission bodies express themselves on social and economic issues?
5. Should missions confine their criticism of the economic order to the lands in which they are working, or should they also condemn those influences at home which work against a better economic order abroad? In view of the sources of their support, to what extent are missions free?
6. Should missions act as employees of government, e.g., overseers of reformatory settlements, etc.
7. Should missionaries direct the welfare work of private industrial concerns?

8. Is paternalism to be commended as a general policy for industrial welfare work?
9. Is it advisable for missionaries to enter the trade union field?
10. Is it wise for missionaries to accept responsibility for the recruiting of labour?
11. A large number of the Christian community in a given centre are without work. A strike breaks out, and there is a demand for strike breakers. Should the missionary attempt to get the unemployed Christians employed in this capacity?
12. Should missions accept responsibility for the training of social workers?
13. Is the social work of missions an end in itself?
14. Is there any distinction between the social responsibility of missions and that of the church?
15. Is there any difference between a low standard of pay in Christian work and in industry?

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CHAPTER VII

FOR WHAT DOES CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EDUCATE?

THE history of education in India, for a period of many years, represents a conflict between two opposing points of view, viz., whether Indian culture should be transmitted through the vernaculars, or whether Western culture should be introduced with English as the medium of instruction.

The East India Company, during the early days of its rule in India, made no attempt to introduce Western learning. It was Warren Hastings' policy to interfere as little as possible with the customs and manners of the people. But in 1813, in renewing the Company's charter, Parliament ordered the Company to devote a lakh of rupees for "the revival and improvement of literature, the encouragement of the learned people of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories of India." When controversy arose as to whether instruction was to be given in English or in the vernaculars, the Company directors declared in favour of Oriental languages and for the furtherance of Oriental culture.

When the Company Charter was renewed in 1833, the House of Commons laid down that "no native of the said Indian territories . . . shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the Company." The object of this section was to associate Indians in

the Company administration as a measure of economy. It was felt by many that if Indians were to be associated with the Company in any responsible capacity they must understand the language and customs of the Company authorities, and hence must have an English education. So it was in 1835, that the Governor-General, Lord Bentinck, under the influence of Macaulay, decreed that such money as was available for the purpose of education should be spent on English education alone. Macaulay himself was of opinion that one shelf of a good European library was of more worth than the combined native literature of India and Arabia. The ideal of universal primary education was not a part of his thinking. He believed that if the upper strata could be educated, education would in some way or other filter through to the bottom.

Macaulay left India in 1837, convinced that Western education was to be the future education of India. But it was only two years later when Lord Auckland again appropriated funds for Oriental learning. It was becoming clear that India's educational problem could only be met by placing emphasis upon primary education.

The Dispatch of 1854 laid down a policy of education, which in its general outlines, is still being followed. Each province was to organize its own department of public instruction, while the Central Government was to concern itself with the broader educational problems and certain problems of finance. A system of co-operation was worked out between Government and privately-managed schools whereby such schools as submitted to Government inspection and met Government requirements were to be given financial grants-in-aid, and this practice has continued down to the present day. Government schools exist, but their

number has never been large enough to meet the educational needs of the country. The Dispatch also outlined a University system which was to be of the affiliating type. It placed a new emphasis upon primary education, repudiating the Macaulay theory of permeation from the top.

The Dispatch of 1882, the Resolution of 1904 and the Resolution of 1913, all encouraged the extension of primary education.

In 1921, under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, education was transferred to Indian control. In the Governor's Provinces there are now Indian ministers of education responsible to the Provincial Legislatures. Unfortunately, however, there are never enough funds available to meet the ministerial estimates, and hence, despite the plans and desires of the ministers, universal free and compulsory education remains a distant goal.

The most of the schools in India are pretty much on a level. Government sets the standard and inspects to see that the schools conform to it. The living, experimental school is a rarity indeed. Individual personality is a very small factor in the educational system. The student's primary interest is in passing examinations and he resents the introduction of any subject or subjects which might detract from what he conceives to be the main purpose of the school. On the other hand, the success of the teacher is measured by the percentage of his "passes" and not by the influence which he exerts upon his pupils.

Mahatma Gandhi, writing upon the subject of Indian education, makes the following searching criticisms :

The existing system of education is defective . . . in three most important matters—(1) It is based upon foreign culture to the almost entire

exclusion of indigenous culture. (2) It ignores the culture of the heart and hand, and confines itself simply to the head. (3) Real education is impossible through a foreign medium. . . . A boy is never taught to have any pride in his surroundings. . . . His own civilization is presented to him as imbecile, barbarous, superstitious and useless for all practical purposes. . . . If the mass of educated youths are not entirely denationalised, it is because the ancient culture is too deeply imbedded in them. . . . If I had my way I would certainly destroy the majority of the present text-books, and cause to be written text-books which have a bearing on and correspondence with the home life, so that a boy as he learns may react upon his immediate surroundings. . . . In India, where more than 80 per cent of the population is agricultural and 10 per cent industrial, it is a crime to make education merely literary, and to unfit boys and girls for manual work. . . . Our children must be taught the dignity of labour. . . . Manual training will serve a double purpose in a poor country like ours; it will pay for the education of our children and teach them an occupation. . . . The foreign medium has caused brain fag, put an undue strain on the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disables them for filtrating their learning to the family or to the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system. It has prevented the growth of our vernaculars. If I had the powers of a despot, I would today stop the tuition of our boys and girls through a foreign medium. . . . I regard English as the language of international commerce and diplomacy, and therefore consider its knowledge on the part of some of us essential. As it contains some of the richest treasures of thought and

literature, I would encourage its careful study among those who have linguistic talents, and expect them to translate these treasures for the nation in its vernaculars. Nothing can be further from my thought than that we should become exclusive or erect barriers, but I contend that an appreciation of other cultures can fitly follow, never precede, an appreciation and assimilation of our own. It is my firm opinion that no culture has treasures as rich as ours has.

According to the Census of 1931, 90.7 per cent. of the people of India were illiterate—84.4 per cent. of the males and 97.1 per cent. of the females. Of the 10,719,000 of children who were enrolled in the middle and primary schools in 1930-31, approximately 75 per cent. were in the lower primary classes, and nearly half in a most rudimentary stage. School attendance registers show a steady decrease in numbers from the primary up to the higher standards. Very, very few of those who enter school stay longer than two or three years at the most. Probably 50 per cent. of those who have been exposed to a bit of schooling relapse into illiteracy—if indeed they can be said to have ever been literate. School attendance not being compulsory, the village child is kept out of school whenever needed in the fields and hence the little time that is spent in school is by no means uninterrupted. The large majority of the primary school teachers are untrained and little fitted to be village leaders.

We hear much in India today about the need for vocational training, but as a matter of fact the high schools and colleges of India have from the beginning been almost too narrowly vocational. The educational object of the East India Company, as we have seen, was to train Indian clerks and sub-

ordinates. How well the schools have succeeded is amply illustrated by the ever-increasing army of graduates and matriculates seeking posts as clerks and Government servants. India still needs vocational schools, but schools that train for the vocation of living.

From the days of Schwarz and Carey, Christian missionaries in India have been interested in education. The opening of the Serampore College in 1818 was an outstanding event in missionary history. But it was Duff who exerted the most profound influence upon Indian education. As early as 1835 in defending educational missions as opposed to evangelistic missions, he said :

If in India you only impart ordinary useful knowledge, you thereby demolish what by its people is regarded as sacred. A course of instruction that professes to convey truth of any kind thus becomes a species of religious education in such a land—all education being there regarded as religious or theological. Every branch of sound general knowledge which you inculcate becomes the destroyer of some corresponding part in the Hindu system.¹

Duff was a firm believer in the superiority of Western education and he undoubtedly had a large share in determining the decision of 1835, and later in shaping the Education Dispatch of 1854.

Although the Dispatch of 1854 made no specific reference to missionary education, the grant-in-aid system authorised therein has had an important bearing upon missions. In the early years a large majority of the schools thus aided were mission schools, and there are few if any missions today

¹ Smith, George, *Life of Alexander Duff*, p. 292.

which are not receiving financial help from Government.

The Directors of the East India Company were for many years afraid to give any sign of any thing that might be interpreted as religious favouritism. The House of Commons in revising the Charter of the Company in 1793 definitely rejected a clause providing for the despatch to India of missionaries and schoolmasters to be maintained by the Governments of the Presidencies, and the Directors of the Company were very chary about granting licenses to missionaries to work in Company territory. Nevertheless, individual Directors and servants of the Company did show their friendship toward individual missionaries, and the relationship was not wholly without value to either party. The early Governors-General were for the most part apprehensive of what might be the result if Government should openly favour the Christian religion. But when the Company Charter was revised in 1813, the right of Christian workers to enter India was finally established, and Parliament openly revealed its sympathy with their activities. True, the missionary had still to obtain a license to carry on his work, but the burden of proof for rejecting a license lay with the Company Directors. The Charter of 1833 did away with licensing altogether and allowed free residence to all missionaries. But it was not until the Dispatch of 1854 that the Bible was admitted to the libraries of Government institutions, though any reference to Christianity in Government schools was still prohibited. Hence it was that Duff strongly supported the grant-in-aid system—a system which he firmly believed would allow mission schools to exist side by side with Government schools and at the same time supply the deficiency, which from the mission standpoint,

Government schools lacked. What Duff did not foresee was the almost fatal educational standardization which has resulted from the Government-missions connection.

Shortly after the close of the World War, the mission boards of Great Britain and North America sent an educational commission to India to study Christian education. The Commission, popularly known as the Fraser Commission, published its report in 1920 under the title, *Village Education in India*. The Commission recognized the inadequacy of the prevailing type of mission education to meet rural needs and made a series of recommendations for its improvement, the most important one probably being the recommendation concerning the work of the vocational middle school—an institution modelled somewhat after the Hampton-Tuskegee pattern in America.

"The real wealth of a nation," said the Commission, "does not consist in its material development but in the true well-being and happiness of its men and women. . . . No literary curriculum will do this; no borrowed culture can achieve it. The highest kind of culture . . . must be within the reach of any man who can use it, but the great need of the rural people is a vocational middle school, making the village boy into a man and a workman. Such a school . . . must mean not merely efficiency (although it must mean that), but character; not productiveness only, but personality. . . . For the missionary face to face with the problem of illiteracy in the mass movement areas, the great hope today is the cordial acceptance of the faith in labour as a moral and educational force and in combined effort to raise the level of the people by a practical education, which will fit them for life. This, we

submit, is the function of the vocational middle school."

One of the members of the Commission, Professor D. J. Fleming, published a little book of his own, under the title, *Schools with a Message in India*. In the introduction to this book, Dr. Fleming makes the following statement :

The curriculum laid down by Government has not been sufficiently related to the future livelihood of village children. Missions in the past have largely followed the Government lead in adopting courses of an over-literary character. They as well as the Government, have failed to provide a type of education that will fit the majority for the kind of life they will have to live. It has been the controlling desire of missions to give all a reading knowledge of the Bible, and to develop the most promising material for mission service. But this kind of education in itself does not meet the most urgent need of the masses. At the economic level of rural India the earning capacity of the average boy in his own village must be raised if education is to get widespread support. When one considers the extreme poverty of the people, preventing them from developing in a rounded way, it becomes plain that one fundamental aim in their education must be the achievement of economic salvation for the people. To discover just what to teach in a village school is one of the greatest and most baffling problems before educationists in India today. For its solution workers are needed who are conversant with the best educational history and experience of the West, and yet who have eyes to see and serve needs and conditions about them. Something creative is necessary.

More than a decade has passed since the survey of the Fraser Commission. Individual schools,

following the lead of Moga in the Punjab, have registered progress. The number of "Schools with a Message," has increased to the point where a book published in 1928 can bear the title, *Fourteen Experiments in Rural Education*,—the word "experiment" being stressed, for very few of the schools have behind them a record of actual achievement. The vast majority of the schools are still thinking in terms of the orthodox curriculum and preparation for university examinations.

The question now arises, What are mission-schools for? Are they simply to supplement the educational work of Government, or have they a more definite purpose? Every missionary will claim that the mission school in India has a definite purpose. He may be specific and say that the function of the mission school in India is to lead boys and girls to Jesus Christ. If he does not care to state the matter thus baldly, he will probably say, that the mission school is making a *plus* contribution to Indian education—in other words, giving something that the Government school cannot possibly give. But when it comes to finding out what this something is, the answer is pretty vague. Some say it is the Bible hour and some say it is personal influence. Accepting both answers for the minute, where do they take us? What is the Bible period in the average village school? Generally a religious song or two, a lengthy prayer by the teacher, the reading of a passage of scripture chosen at random, and then perhaps an attempt to expound this scripture. In a better type of school the scripture reading and sermon are generally replaced by the telling of a Bible story—also usually chosen at random. Is this procedure ample justification for the maintenance of the mission school?

Or take the matter of personal influence. Who is the teacher? Generally either a young man with a vernacular education and a year or two of teacher training, or an elderly man or woman who came into the schools long before the days of teacher training, and who has been teaching on and on until the teaching has become lifeless and automatic. All of these people could be outstanding Christian examples, and some of them are. But I am afraid that most of our teachers look upon their work as a job, rather than as a calling. They go through the required motions every day, but they do little more.

The blame cannot rest wholly upon the shoulders of the teacher. It is an impossible proposition to put any man or woman in a village, perhaps as the only Christian in that village, leave him or her alone without supervision and expect that teacher to get any place. When American university and theological professors find it difficult to keep from going to seed—witness the dog-eared and yellowing notes of professors of our own acquaintance—how much more the Indian village teacher, who has no intellectual stimulus whatsoever. It is no wonder that his early enthusiasms fade, and his personality becomes cold and lifeless. It is the exception rather than the rule for the Indian school teacher to be noted for his personal influence.

We might as well face the situation and admit it. In far too many cases the village school conducted by the mission gives nothing whatsoever more than is given by the Government school. In fact, too many of our schools for comfort are sub-Government standard.

The only justification that I can see for mission schools in India today, is that they should be superior schools. I am not concerned about the length

of the line maintained by missions. But I am concerned that that which is kept should be outstanding. The excuse that a mission school offers Bible courses is not ample justification for running a poor mission school alongside a better Government school. I am not in sympathy with the theory that a mission school of little educational value should continue to operate because of its potential evangelistic value. If education must be regarded as a preparation for evangelism, let the advertisement at least be worthy of the product advertised.

Let us look for a moment at the educational system in a mission whose schools are considerably above the average. This mission maintains 73 village schools; 15 city primary schools; 13 station schools, i.e., schools at the district headquarters, which include primary facilities for children of the village itself and boarding arrangements for the pupils sent in from the village primary schools for their middle school education; 9 special schools, such as vocational and agricultural schools; a training school for kindergarten teachers; and 3 high schools; while the mission co-operates in and largely supports a Teachers' Training College and a Theological College, and also has representation on the staff of a strong liberal arts college.

The 73 village schools have about 2,000 pupils, of whom 68 per cent are in the infant classes, 12 per cent are in the first standard, 9 per cent are in the second standard, 7 per cent are in the third standard, and 3 per cent are in the fourth standard.

12 out of 74 village teachers have had a high school education and some teacher training; 34 have had less than a high school education, but a bit of teacher training; 28 are wholly untrained.

Although the village schools are nominally primary schools with 4 vernacular standards, the figures presented above show clearly that 4 standard education is much more of an ideal than a reality. 80 per cent of the pupils enrolled are in the beginners and first standards, while 89 per cent of the pupils are in the beginners, first and second standards. Since a four-standard education is regarded as the minimum essential to secure permanent literacy, it is evident that much of the mission education is wasted. The irregularity of attendance in village schools leads to further wastage—it being the exception rather than the rule when a pupil completes the four primary standards in four years.

Approximately one-half of these village schools are in competition with local board schools. It is generally recognized in such instances of competition that the mission schools are for outcaste children. In 1923 the Government of Bombay declared it as Government's policy "that no disability should be imposed on the children of the depressed classes in the matter of receiving education in schools managed with the aid of public funds." Since that time complaints have been enquired into and every effort made to give the children of the depressed classes a fair chance at an education. Though progress is slow, the report of the Director of Public Instruction shows that Government is getting results. In the light of Government's declared policy to bring children of all castes and groups together into one school, it certainly is a serious question whether missions, should by competing with Government schools, widen a breach which Government is seeking to narrow.

When 89 per cent of all the village pupils are in the first two standards, it is only fair to ask, What

are the implications of this for the village school curriculum? Is a purely literary approach actually meeting village needs? Is it possible to leave the uneducated adults out of the village educational picture? Is the school as we understand it, actually the best approach to the village problem?

I am heartily in sympathy with all experiments that are being made to extend the usefulness of mission schools, but along with these experiments, I should like to see other experiments—experiments which look to Government neither for financial assistance nor for guidance, but which have before them the single aim of serving the village.

The most common type of mission high school in India is the day school, generally enrolling from 250 to 1,000 students. A minority of the students are Christian, the vast majority being Hindus and Muslims. The resident students live either in hostels or in private quarters. The recently published report of the Commission on Christian Higher Education in India says of the mission high schools that while their purpose "is generally held to be the influencing of the large number of non-Christian students who fill their classes," and that while many of them have been of value from this point of view, "they have in many places been obliged so to accommodate themselves to the Government system, and so to yield to the very real difficulty of obtaining an adequate Christian staff, that there is in many cases little to choose between a Christian and a Government or other non-Christian school." Educationally, the mission high schools "are on the whole distinctly inferior to the Government High Schools, although they are generally better than most of the private-aided schools." Too often "the proportion of the Christians to non-Christians on the staff of the high school is very small, and the

quality, with comparatively few exceptions, is not high. . . . The teaching of religion in most of the high schools is inferior to the teaching of almost any other subject."¹

In an attempt to remedy this situation, missions are more and more placing before themselves the ideal of well-equipped residential high schools, staffed by well-trained Christian teachers. This step means a decrease in the total number of mission high schools, but it means a distinct increase in Christian influence. Sooner or later missions will have to recognize that their contribution to present-day India lies not so much in the realm of quantity as that of quality.

Mission colleges have had an influence in India out of all proportion to their numbers. The names of Alexander Duff, William Miller and John Wilson, are names to be reckoned with in India. If higher education has not been as fruitful in winning converts as its earlier protagonists hoped that it might be, the mission colleges have made a distinct contribution to the cultural, moral and spiritual welfare of the land, and have trained their full share of the nation's leaders of public thought.

But withal, the Christian colleges of India are facing problems. The Agra Educational Conference, convened by the National Christian Council in 1929, made this very clear. This Conference, which was attended by educators from all over India, felt that while the Christian colleges have an unprecedented opportunity to serve India in the days which are ahead, they also have certain handicaps to overcome : such as more intense competition from non-Christian schools; and a falling off in financial resources, both missionary society contributions and

¹ *The Christian College in India*, pp. 256ff.

Government grants. The Conference was of opinion that relative to the total number of pupils educated, the proportion of those educated in Christian institutions will decline, and hence the Christian colleges will no longer occupy the position of leadership which they once did so far as quantity is concerned. Therefore the colleges "must be so excellently staffed and so well equipped that even if they become a small minority amid the number of colleges in India, it will be their alumni that will furnish the majority of the best leaders of Indian thought and life."¹

The college leaders present at Agra believed that there was an urgent need "for a prompt, comprehensive, thorough, even radical reconsideration of Christian educational policy in the light of the total Indian situation."² There must be a "readiness to pool resources both of personnel and money, and to sacrifice, for the sake of a greater ultimate achievement, educational institutions which have had a noble history and are still rendering good service."² The Conference realized that such a policy must of necessity occasion sacrifices which would entail much pain, and therefore felt that some dispassionate outside commission of great weight should make a careful study of the situation and present its report. It appealed for the co-operation of the Conference of British Missionary Societies and the Committee of Reference and Counsel in America in this study. The result was the appointment of the Commission on Christian Higher Education, which began its work in India in the winter of 1930.

The Lindsay Commission's analysis of the present position of missionary colleges in India is

¹ *National Christian Council Review*, April, 1929, p. 183.

² *Ibid.*

a keen one.¹ While recognizing that mission colleges are playing a part of high value and importance in the education of India, the Commission feels that "their relative standing is not so high as it used to be." The colleges in the larger university centres "rank academically behind the Government colleges, but above other aided colleges . . . while the smaller colleges in the country districts fall very much below the standard of these larger colleges." Formerly the Christian colleges used to get the cream of the University students, but this is no longer the case. "The Christian colleges, on the whole, are getting the second best" and their graduates "have not the pre-eminence they once had."

There are several reasons for this loss of prestige. One is that the faculties appear to have neither the time nor the resources for scholarly research. Few students in India are having the opportunity of being taught by men who have found things out for themselves.

Second, "The Indian universities, and the colleges other than the Christian colleges, are now controlled and almost entirely manned by Indians." There is a growing feeling among educated Indians that the university system must be shaped "to develop the culture of modern India." If this change comes, "there will be little sympathy shown for colleges which are felt to express the cultural domination of foreign nations; which are not fit to play their part in fashioning an indigenous system. The Christian colleges as they stand are not only teachers of Christianity, they are teachers of characteristic British and American culture." Both Britain and America "have much to give to

¹ *The Christian College in India*, pp. 76ff.

modern India, but only on condition that modern India is free to take from Britain and America what she needs, and use it for her own purposes. She is not likely to submit to cultural domination."

Other weaknesses of the mission colleges in India are those arising from their double purpose—an educational and a missionary one; the domination of the examination system; and the numerous regulations of the affiliating universities, which tend to deprive the colleges to a large extent of their educational initiative.

• The examination system has such a hold over the Indian student that he is exceedingly reluctant to study anything which is not of assistance in passing his examinations—a condition which has a direct bearing upon the Bible teaching of the mission colleges.

The College Commission faced the question whether the Christian colleges should break away from the university system, but decided the matter in the negative. It recommended rather that the Christian colleges should assume for themselves the two new functions of research and extension—thus bringing the colleges into closer connection both with the church and the community at large. Just what the effect of this recommendation will be remains to be seen. A properly guided programme of research and extension should be of help both to the professors within the college and to the larger community, but as long as the examination axe hangs over the heads of the students, I am afraid that it will have very little effect upon the college itself. Some way must be found of opening up the tightly closed system, but I doubt very much whether the educational commission has found the key.

Perhaps the greatest contribution that the Christian college can make to India under the present circumstances, will be in the realm of Christian living. If it accepts the University system, it must teach the required subjects in a superior manner; but more than that, the college must be a demonstration of the superior life. And the missionary who aspires to be a college teacher, must be one who can really exemplify this life.

The Nationalist movement in politics has awakened in the student class a strong desire for freedom. But as yet the emphasis is almost wholly upon rights and very little upon duties. Real freedom will only come as new life is awakened in the villages. And new life will only be awakened in the villages as trained young men return to the villages, filled with the desire to serve. Those Christian schools which sense this opportunity and seek to meet it will be truly wise.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is it wise for mission schools to be regulated by Government standards? Are missions and Government interested in the same results of education?
2. Is the grant-in-aid policy for mission schools a satisfactory one?
3. Does the fact that approximately 90 per cent of the pupils in the village schools are in the first two standards give any hint as to possible curriculum?
4. Is a purely literary education adequate for a country in which 90 per cent of the people are agriculturists?
5. Can a mission school operating alongside a local board school justify itself on the ground that it is serving the outcaste children?

6. Should a school of little educational value be maintained in a village because of its potential evangelistic value?

7. Is the offering of courses in Bible an adequate justification for running a mission school alongside a local board school?

8. Should religious teaching be compulsory in villages having but one school?

9. Should the village school teacher be expected to be evangelist and social worker as well?

10. How can village education be most effectively supervised?

11. What is the village school's reason for being? Does a mission school give something that a Government school cannot give?

12. Is there any way to prevent the present tremendous lapse into illiteracy on the part of those who have been exposed to a bit of education?

13. At what stage, if any, should English be introduced as the medium of instruction?

14. Which is more important for the Indian student: acquaintance with his own or with Western culture?

15. At what stage, if at all, should vocational training begin? Are vocational bias, or out-and-out vocational schools to be preferred?

16. Should the proportion of non-Christian pupils in attendance at mission boarding and high schools be limited?

17. Should the proportion of non-Christian teachers in a Christian high school be limited?

18. Should mission schools seek to guide their most promising material into church or mission service?

19. Should missions shorten their educational line, simply maintaining demonstration centres, or should traditional and established work be continued?

20. Is it possible or desirable to centralize the many institutions for higher education now maintained by missions?

What principles should govern?

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CHAPTER VIII

IS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RELIGIOUSLY EFFECTIVE?

SOME form of religious education has always been a part of the missionary enterprise in India. From the very beginning, converts and prospective converts have been taught, and religious instruction has been given both in the day schools and in the Sunday schools conducted by the missions. The type of instruction has varied with individual missionaries and missions. Thus we have the statement of Francisco Xavier, who landed at Goa, on the West Coast of India, in 1542. Describing his method of work he says :

As soon as I arrived in any heathen village where they had sent for me to give baptism, I gave orders for all—men, women and children—to be collected in one place. Then beginning with the first elements of the Christian faith, I taught them there is one God—I made them each make three times the sign of the cross; then putting on a surplice, I began to recite, in a loud voice and in their own language, the form of general confession, the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Ave Maria and the Salve Regina. Two years ago, I translated all these prayers into the language of the country. When the people appeared to me sufficiently instructed to receive baptism, I ordered them all to ask God's pardon publicly for the sins of their past life, and to do this with a loud voice and in the presence of their neighbours still hostile to the Christian religion, in order to touch the hearts of the heathen and

confirm the faith of the good. All the heathen are filled with admiration at the holiness of the law of God, and express the greatest shame at having lived so long in ignorance of the true God. They willingly hear about the mysteries and rules of the Christian religion, and treat me, poor sinner as I am, with the greatest respect. Many, however, put away from them with hardness of heart the truth which they well know. When I have done my instruction, I ask, one by one, all those who desire baptism if they believe without hesitation in each of the articles of the faith. All immediately, holding their arms in the form of the cross, declare with one voice that they believe all entirely. Then at last I baptise them in due form, and I give to each his name written on a ticket. After their baptism the new Christians go back to their homes and bring me their wives and families for baptism. When all are baptized I order all the temples of their false gods to be destroyed and all the idols to be broken in pieces. I can give you no idea of the joy I feel in seeing this done, witnessing the destruction of the idols by the very people who but lately adored them. In all the towns and villages I leave the Christian doctrine in writing in the language of the country, and I prescribe at the same time the manner in which it is to be taught in the morning and evening schools. When I have done all this in one place, I pass to another, and so on successively to the rest. In this way I go all round the country, bringing the natives into the fold of Jesus Christ, and the joy that I feel in this is far too great to be expressed in a letter, or even by word of mouth.¹

Other missionaries have adopted other methods. Some have emphasized the Bible. Some have

¹ Quoted by Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, pp. 453-54.

emphasized the Bible plus the catechisms and the creeds. Others have attempted to relate religion more directly to life. Very few Protestant missions have followed any definite programme of religious education. Such programmes as have been followed have usually looked forward to indoctrination in the peculiar doctrines of the instructing church. Although the India Sunday School Union puts out a series of Sunday lessons based upon the International outlines, the great mass of village schools, in which religious education is compulsory, have neither plan nor programme.

A *Survey of Christian Religious Education in Mid-India* is more or less typical of the general situation. 169 organized Sunday schools were covered in this study. Only 35 per cent of these had any supervision from the mission or the church. 17 per cent of the schools had neither an opening nor a closing period of worship. Though the Sunday school is nominally a church responsibility, 78 per cent of the teachers were mission dependents. Only about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the teachers had received any sort of teacher training. Less than half of the schools were using any definite course of study. The method of teaching for adults was either lecture or read-a-verse-and-explain-it. The Intermediates were using the lecture and story methods. The small children were being taught principally by stories, with considerable memory work.

While over half of the day schools reporting were making suggestions to teachers as to hymns, Bible passages to be used, and Bible passages to be memorized, no attempt was being made to map out a daily programme or to follow any systematic plan of instruction. The most popular method of instruction was to tell the Bible story and then either to ask questions about it, or to have the pupils repeat

the story. A considerable number of schools were following the read-a-verse-and-explain-it method—a method often leading to the most bizarre and distorted explanations—particularly if the passage selected should be from the Book of Revelation. The daily religious education period usually consisted of a song, a story or a Bible reading, and a prayer. In only 16 per cent of the schools was the worship programme prepared in advance.

The principal young peoples societies at work were the Christian Endeavour and the Epworth League. Practically every society reported a stereotyped programme, with an address as the principal feature. Some societies were using denominational catechisms. Very little opportunity was offered for individual expression. In only two instances was the attempt made to correlate the various programmes.¹

The reasons for the backward state of religious education are not hard to find. The majority of the missionaries are either of the educational tradition which places knowledge at the centre, and who believe that biblical knowledge has a unique value, even apart from its content, or they are so busy with their manifold responsibilities that they are unable to give time either to working out or supervising a proper programme of religious education. Furthermore many missionaries have had no technical training in religious education, and the few missionaries who are highly trained and are able to do effective work, are as members of the mission, often compelled to change their places of residence—leaving behind them a half-finished structure which soon deteriorates and collapses. The Indian pastors and catechists trained by the earlier missionaries are

¹ McGavran, D. A., *A Survey of Christian Religious Education in Mid-India*. Pamphlet.

so steeped in the old tradition that they can see no need for change. They have supreme faith in the power of the memorized Bible or the catechism. The number of modern-trained Indian leaders is increasing, but it is still a very small minority.

The hopeful feature in the whole situation is that a steadily growing number of men and women in every province are seeking to relate religious education to life—to bring religion from the realm of abstract knowledge down into the arena of everyday relationships.

Such a group was found in the All-India Conference on Religious Education held in Bombay prior to the Jerusalem Conference, where religious education was conceived not only in the traditional sense of imparting biblical knowledge, but also as the formation of life attitudes. The Conference recognized the importance of laying emphasis upon child experience as a means of religious education, viewing the curriculum "not as externally devised schemes and materials but as the enlarging experience of individual personalities." It emphasized "the cultivation of open-minded attitudes on the part of the children through development of good habits of thinking and judgment individually and in groups." It held that "school life should not be isolated from real life," but that natural social relationships should obtain in both class-room and hostel. Curricula, in the opinion of the Conference, should not consist simply of Bible lessons to be learned, but should be expanded to include "stories, biographies, readings, activities, plays, memory work, dramas and music arranged in order of the child's mental and spiritual needs, and aiming to produce in him all the attitudes, values and abilities needed by a thoroughly Christian parent, churchman, neighbour . . . and citizen." The changes

in materials should be accompanied by more vital methods of teaching.¹

The curricular materials for use in Indian Sunday schools are decidedly inadequate. There are several fairly complete Bible study courses, such as Clayton's *Graded Bible Lessons*, Pelly's *Graded Course of Religious Training in Missionary Schools*, Annett's *Course for Village Sunday Schools and Primary Departments*, Annett's *Junior Sunday School Course*, and Mrs. Harper's *Bible Courses for Indian Schools*. There are also in use several vernacular adaptations of American materials. The most comprehensive programme of religious education is the *Charterhouse Programme* of the Methodist Episcopal church. The Charterhouse Programme is a twelve-year course seeking to unify all religious educational effort—"church, home, school, community, playground, young peoples' society, pulpit, adult and child, town dweller and villager, literate and illiterate."² It believes that the Sunday school is educationally ineffective and that a better type of religious instruction can be given in the day schools. The Charterhouse Course includes a certain amount of Indian materials, adapted American materials, and considerable supplementary material.

Mrs. A. E. Harper of Moga has outlined an interesting scheme for *The Religious Education of the Villager*, which has its centre in experience. It recognizes that few pastors and teachers are themselves prepared to lead others and so the first step aims at training the teachers through regular meetings, institutes and conferences. The subjects to be covered might include the teaching method of

¹ *Jerusalem Meeting Report*, Vol. ii, pp. 121ff.

² Personal Letter from Rev. E. L. King, March 4, 1931.

Jesus, a simple exposition of the learning process, a careful discussion of the spiritual condition and needs of the people—based upon concrete data, instruction in method—how to tell Bible stories, how to encourage discussion, etc., and some elementary educational psychology. Superintendent and teachers would then plan the religious educational programme together—seeking to outline the objectives and to list the common experiences of educational value. Thus an attempt would be made to catalogue the actual problems, difficulties, needs, pleasures and temptations of the village people, and to use these as the basis for the curriculum. The curriculum will also make place for graded worship and directed activities. Bible story-telling will be according to a systematic plan, only those scripture portions being used which are related to the learner's experience and will contribute to the growth of Christian idealism. Informal dramatization of Bible stories will be widely used. A definite table of the "minimum essentials" of Christian knowledge may be drawn up for the guidance of all teachers—not as a requirement, but as an objective to be kept in mind. Supervision will be regular, thorough and helpful—seeking to develop individual thought, initiative, and responsibility. It is believed that out of such co-operative endeavour it will be possible to discover the outlines of a village programme of Christian education which will be of help to rural missionaries, pastors and workers.¹

Somewhat along the same line, though broader in its conception, is Dr. Clement D. Rockey's plan for the religious education of village Christians as outlined in a thesis submitted as one of the require-

¹ Pamphlet issued by the Committee on Religious Education of the National Christian Council.

ments for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Chicago. Mr. Rockey believes that it is impossible to talk about a curriculum for any group without first having adequate knowledge of the experience of that group. Hence in his study, which deals primarily with conditions in the Western part of the United Provinces, he takes up the social situation, the economic situation, the health or sanitary situation, the position of village Christian women, the educational situation, and the religious situation. He then outlines a suggested technique for developing the type of curriculum desired for the village Christian group.¹

Dr. Rockey defines curriculum as "the experience of the learner or the learning group as that experience undergoes interpretation, enrichment and control in terms of Christian ideals and purposes."²

Now obviously, before the experience of the villager can be built upon, it is necessary to know what he is actually experiencing. Hence Mr. Rockey has developed a research instrument which seeks to discover the problems and needs of Indian village Christians.

Certain criteria are laid down for the selection of situations to be used in teaching :

1. *Frequency*.—The more often a problem presents itself, the more likely it is to have universal teaching value.
2. *Range or spread*.—Experience is complex, therefore different situations should deal with the necessary and important phases of experience.

¹ Reprinted in pamphlet form from *Christian Education*, "The Educational Opportunities of Village Christians," and "A Suggested Technique for Developing the Type of Curriculum Desired for the Village Christian Group."

² *Ibid.*, p. 49.

3. *The situation must be problematic*,—i.e., it should present in itself various possible outcomes.

4. *Cruciality*.—Certain situations involve the possibility of fatal outcomes and so it is necessary to prepare for them, e.g., experiences connected with sex.

5. A situation which has a *leading-on quality* is of more value than one which is an isolated unit, relatively unconnected with further experiences.

6. *Richness of social content*.—The situation chosen should make one more conscious of the social nature of experience.

7. *Richness of Christian implications*.—Certain situations show better than others how Christian ideals and principles work in integrating and organizing experience for the individual.

8. *Degree of need or urgency*.—Certain problems are more persistent and insistent than others.

The next step is to develop the selected situations into teaching units, and here Dr. Rockey adapts the analytical interpretation of a situation developed in Professor Bower's religious education classes in the University of Chicago.¹

The analysis follows :—

1. Concrete statement of the situation or illustration of the problem.

2. Definition of the problem. What is it?

3. What are the factors involved?

4. What personal experiences with the problem can members of the group give?

5. What experiences of others are known to the group?

6. What were the results, actual and possible, of these experiences?

¹ Cf. Bower, W. C., *Character Through Creative Experience*, particularly chap. vii.

7. Pick out the most satisfactory results or alternatives.

8. & 9. From the results selected pick out and agree on the one considered nearest to the accepted Christian ideal.

10. Arrange a worship service on the theme of the problem.

11. Discuss and decide on plans to put into effect the ideal Christian course of action selected by the group.¹

From his own study Dr. Rockey has been able to gather together about 400 teaching units, several of which are elaborated for the help of group leaders.

The success of the programmes outlined by Mrs. Harper and Dr. Rockey, as of all of our Indian religious education, depends upon the training of workers. There is little reason to expect that our religious education will rise above the level of its leadership. The students in the teachers' training schools maintained by missions receive some type of religious instruction, but no systematic attempt is made to train them for intelligent religious leadership. This should be attempted, even though it may mean adding an additional year to the training school curriculum. At the same time, every effort should be made to deepen the spiritual lives of the teachers who are going out into the villages, for to the great mass of non-Christians the village teacher is Christianity incarnate. Certainly this is a tremendous responsibility to place upon the shoulders of any man, and we dare do nothing less than to exert every effort to make the teacher adequate. In nine cases out of ten teacher-failure is mission-failure, due to the negligence of the

¹ Rockey, *op. cit.*, pp. 52ff.

mission in supervising and encouraging its lonely outposts.

In addition to sound initial training and supervision, opportunity should be provided for teachers to attend refresher courses or summer schools. Such opportunity can be provided through a system of rotation, with little dislocation of the regular school schedule. In many centres the gathering of the teachers at district headquarters for their monthly pay is utilized as an opportunity for the use of model lessons and for the discussion of common problems.

Practically every mission maintains some institution for the training of catechists and Biblewomen, but very few of these schools give their students even an elementary acquaintance with the modern technique of religious education. The training school maintained by the India Sunday School Union at Coonoor is doing a good work in taking Christian workers for longer and shorter periods of time and instructing them in Sunday school administration, teaching methods, child psychology, educational psychology, etc. Schools of this kind should be duplicated in many parts of India.

It is only in recent years that any attempt has been made to introduce definite courses in religious education into the colleges and seminaries. In 1929, the Committee on Religious Education of the National Christian Council made a study of the teaching of religious education in theological seminaries and made recommendations to the committee on Theological Education. As a result, the Serampore Senate appointed a sub-committee to prepare a syllabus with a view to introducing religious education into the theological curriculum. The syllabus was approved in the winter of 1930 and religious education is now an option in the Serampore

curriculum as well as in the curriculum of certain of the vernacular seminaries.

St. Christopher's Teachers' Training College for Women, in Madras, which is supported by nine missionary bodies, offers its students an outline study of the Bible for two hours a week in the first year and a course in methods of teaching for one hour a week in the second year. It also conducts small discussion groups dealing with either subject matter or method. All Tamil and Telugu students are given practical experience in Sunday school teaching and some experience in teaching religion in day schools. They have weekly preparation classes for this practical work. An attempt is being made to link up the various efforts at religious education in Madras, in the hope that the women graduates who have gone through Christian colleges may be better fitted for teaching in Christian schools. The general idea is that the students will take outline courses in Old and New Testament at the Women's Christian College; a course of study of the religious development of children and methods of teaching at the Training College; a study of the gospels and the detailed study of some portion of the New Testament as an extension course of the Bangalore Seminary; and a course in church history and a course of study on Indian Religious Thought as evening courses while in college or the Training School. Additional requirements concern attendance at a summer course at St. Andrew's Training School, Coonoor, and approved teaching in a mission school or Sunday school. The student who completes the full course in a satisfactory fashion will be awarded a diploma in religious teaching. An extension of this general type of thing would do much to raise the standard of religious teaching in our mission schools.

Although Bible teaching is an integral part of the curriculum of mission high schools and colleges, it is very seldom upon a par with the teaching of other subjects. Furthermore, the fact that Bible study is generally required of non-Christian students does not add to its effectiveness. A man may be required to attend a Bible class, but it is impossible to compel him to pay attention when once he is in the class. We cannot *force* our religion upon anyone. The psychological principle of "readiness" applies just as much to Bible study as to any other subject.

India as a whole has not yet been compelled to face the "conscience clause"—the provision that mission colleges receiving government grants must grant exemption from required attendance at Bible classes to those students whose parents request such exemption. At the present time the "conscience clause" is operative only in Burma and the United Provinces, but with the rise of the spirit of nationalism it will undoubtedly be extended to other provinces as well.

A few missions have voluntarily extended the "conscience clause" to primary and secondary schools, particularly in those villages where the mission school is the only school at work. It would seem that a widespread voluntary acceptance of this principle would be more statesmanlike than a forced yielding at some inevitable future date. Goodwill is an asset in missions, just as in any other enterprise.

There is a growing dissatisfaction in India over the present state of worship in our Sunday schools and day schools, and various experiments are now in process in the attempt to make children's worship more meaningful.

Miss Van Doren in her *Christian Education in*

the Villages of India, describes the typical situation :

Bang, bang, clang, bang! The small village urchin is pounding vigorously upon the length of iron rail suspended from a neem tree, that does duty as a school bell. He is summoning his schoolmates to prayer; and the observer wishes that some degree of the enthusiasm of his rail-pounding could be seen reflected in their response! After five or ten minutes, a dozen unwashed boys and one girl straggle into the class room, and sit down in the midst of a litter of cracked slates and torn books. After another five minutes, the teacher strolls in, takes his place in the front of the room, and announces a lyric or bhajan. It is started on too high a pitch, and while the boys are singing it shrilly in several discordant keys the teacher rapidly turns over the leaves of a torn Bible, and when the discords of the singing have died away, proceeds to read the 68th Psalm. The 'high words' of the vernacular translation have no connection with the children's vocabulary, and they make no pretence of paying attention. The reading is punctuated by several loud demands for 'Silence'!; but at last all of the 35 verses are finished. Prayer is then announced. The boys kneel unsupported in the middle of the rough floor, which bruises their bare knees. The leader prays for fully ten minutes, using a conventional vocabulary and many high sounding phrases. After the first two minutes because of increasing discomfort, the boys begin to wriggle and whisper and pinch their neighbours. They join heartily in the final *Amen!* —their only chance for participation since the opening song. But all is not over yet; the teacher now spends five minutes in lecturing them on the sins of inattention and irreverence.¹

¹ Pp. 26-27.

Contrast this with a second school :

Beside the building is a spreading tamarind tree that has been converted into an outdoor chapel. A rectangular space has been walled in with stones carried by the children from a nearby hillside. The stones have been alternately whitened and red-washed. In the sunny space beside the well a little garden has been enclosed with a thorn fence, and within it are masses of marigolds. . . The teacher is sitting on a date-palm mat in front of the garden. He plays an Indian air on his old violin, while the boys and girls enter noiselessly, each carrying his palm mat made in the school. Each child sits cross-legged upon his mat, and raises his hands, placed palm-to-palm in the Indian posture of prayer. When all have gathered, the service proceeds. Each part has been thoughtfully planned by the teacher with the help of the 'Worship Committee' of older children. The lyrics or bhajans have been well learned in school. The teacher plays them on his violin, while two boys are accorded the privilege of marking the rhythm with a pair of brass cymbals and a small drum. For the long reading from the Bible is substituted a recitation by the second standard of the Beatitudes which they have just learned in their scripture class. With the teacher's help the third class have composed a prayer, making it in simple village language, as an expression of children's adoration with simple thanks and petition. It is repeated by two of the class members. Twice, at the beginning and the end, there is a minute of silence, when the teacher plays softly and the children are asked to think of God, the loving Father who is with them. The whole service lasts but ten minutes.¹

While the spirit of worship is not entirely dependent upon external surroundings, environment does

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

play an important part. India is favoured in that the out-of-doors may be utilized for so many months of the year. If the service of worship must be held in the school room, the room should be made as neat and attractive as possible. As Miss Van Doren well points out, "Certain accompaniments of Hindu devotion have real value, and may be used indoors or out to produce an atmosphere of worship familiar to the Indian child. . . . Among these worship customs is the use of flowers, so essential to the Indian temple service. . . . Another attractive Hindu tradition is the use of lights. . . . Indian posture in prayer should also be encouraged. . . . The *nameskar*—the hands placed palm to palm and uplifted—is a posture so suggestive of worship that it can be almost universally employed."¹ To the extent of their ability the children should participate in planning programmes of worship.

* Experiments aiming at the improvement of worship are being carried out in various centres. A lady missionary of the Methodist Church in Meerut has worked out a series of worship programmes for the Junior Church covering a period of two years. *Siksha Sangha*, the Union Christian High School at Bishnupur, Bengal, has recently opened an out-of-doors place of devotion—"a garden sanctuary"—which it is hoped will be used more freely than the formal school chapel. In the Shahdara Farm School (American Presbyterian Mission) near Lahore, the children are developing their own Sunday worship service and also sunset worship on the roof. Mr. E. L. King of the Methodist Church has compiled a *Source Book of Worship Materials* for use in India, as well as a *Book of Worship for*

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

Young People. Both of these books are well-done and contain excellent materials.

As indicated above, in discussing the *Charterhouse Programme*, the Methodist Church has the most comprehensive plan of religious education operative in India today. The church is attempting "to bring into a unity of purpose and action such hitherto isolated units as the home, the community, the pulpit, the playground, the leisure hour and the schools." It is seeking to emphasize "that the church as such has an undivided responsibility with regard to each of these, that it cannot foist off onto subordinate organizations final responsibility for any of them, that these organizations are *means and not ends* and as such have no right whatever to the assertion of independent policies, particularly when they tend to compete with one another." The Methodist aim is "to focus the personnel of the Church *as a unit* upon these problems and programmes, demanding that they work together instead of in ignorance and unconcern of what others are doing." The instrument through which it seeks to realize these ends is the *Charterhouse Programme*.¹

The India Mission of the Disciples of Christ is doing good work in a much smaller area. For the past 10 years the mission has had its own director of religious education. It has its standard of religious education, and is seeking to correlate Sunday and week-day school activities. The mission also conducts a number of Daily Vacation Bible Schools, as well as institutes for the encouragement of teachers.

A worthwhile local experiment is being conducted in the Vadala Station of the American Marathi

¹ *Indian Church Problems of Today*, pp. 218ff.

Mission.' A full-time Indian director of religious education is employed who is responsible for the religious education of both the station schools and the church. A religious education class room has been fitted up in the church and each class of the school goes to its religious education work on schedule. The Sunday lessons are linked up with the week-day programme, so that the children are receiving a well-rounded course of religious instruction—a refreshing change from the methods of the ordinary mission station. The Vadala District has also employed an Indian religious educator to carry on religious education activities in those villages near Vadala in which the mission schools have been closed because of the opening of local board schools. This experiment is being watched carefully by the mission as a possible solution to the religious education problem in local board areas.

In every section of India there are large numbers of illiterate adult Christians whose only religious instruction is the Sunday sermon. In a pamphlet entitled *The Religious Education of the Christian Adult in India*, Mr. A. G. Atkins presents the problem very effectively. In answer to the question, "What help does the average adult get to keep before him Christian ideals and to rally him to them?" Mr. Atkins replies : "A sermon a week (if the church service is attractive enough to draw him), on some favourite theme of the pastor's choice with a few items of formal worship associated with it—the whole often sadly unrelated to the actual situation our brother or sister has to meet. He may occasionally get to a prayer meeting . . . and truly will be helped by it; every few weeks the pastor will get around to his home. That is the sum of the opportunity he has of getting guidance and encouragement in his actual Christian

living. The rest of the time, all the real problems and responsibilities of a man's life, and all the Christian opportunities, he has to meet alone. Up to the present he has been much under the guidance and control of others; now he has to think and act for himself, bearing entirely new burdens, meeting entirely new challenges. And how little they often have in the way of Christian resources to fall back upon,—some poorly digested Bible knowledge in the form of a few texts and stories hopelessly mixed up, plus some familiarity with the customs of Christian worship.

"Yet it is these . . . we expect to be all that the mature Christian should be. We look to see them acting up to the finest Christian ideals, loyal to the highest Christian standards and having a very positive Christian influence over others. We are disappointed when they fall far short of our hopes. A little thought will keep us from judging them too harshly For after all they have had very little that really fits into their present life-situation, they are getting very little now to really guide them in Christian living in their own circumstances. It should lead us to . . . be ashamed of ourselves that we leave them to meet their world themselves, with so little to back them up."¹

But this situation need not continue. The Indian church can do better by its adult adherents. The Sunday service has its place—and a very real place, but that is not enough. In addition to the regular service an opportunity must be provided to talk over the hindrances to Christian living experienced during the week and an attempt made to discover the Christian approach to these problems. Such a procedure would be a church *school* in the best

¹ Atkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

sense of the word. It would be training in Christian living. The Bible would be used, but it would be used in its proper place, viz., to throw light upon a felt problem rather than as a random object of study. As Mr. Atkins points out, "The prophets did not teach by setting the people of their day to reading the ancient written word and listening to dissertations upon it without relation to the actual situations of life that had to be met. They first of all called attention to the actual situation, then recalled something from the ancient writings and past experiences of their people, and under this inspiration declared their own burning, urgent message for their day. Jesus used the scriptures in the same way, calling attention to and dealing with some actual situation, and then bringing some pertinent word from ancient writ which threw light upon it."¹ The use of such a method will bring the Bible into a vital relationship with the things that concern our people most as Christian men and women.

My answer to the question which heads this chapter would be : Our religious education is religiously effective insofar as it vitalizes and gives a glow to daily living. To the extent that it find its satisfaction in the imparting and repetition of words, it is futile and dead.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is it advisable to work for mission-wide or nation-wide programmes of religious education? What are the advantages and disadvantages?
2. What is the purpose of the Bible period in mission day schools? Is it fulfilling this purpose?
3. Should this Bible period be compulsory?

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

4. Discuss the following statement by a leading missionary educator in India: "While it is the parents' (or it may be, pupils') right and privilege to select the educator, it is the educator's right and privilege to determine the curriculum. In our use of this privilege of the educator, we decide to include Scripture classes . . . because we hold the spiritual message of the Bible to be so vital that no education can be satisfactory which does not provide an understanding of that message."

5. Would this argument hold for villages in which there is but one school?

6. Should indoctrination occupy a larger place in missionary religious education than in the churches at home?

7. Is the same programme of religious education suitable for both Christians and non-Christians?

8. Should Hindu religious materials be utilized in Christian education?

9. What is the place of memorizing in religious education?

10. Are "scripture examinations" an adequate test of religious development?

11. To what extent can untrained teachers utilize child experience as a basis of teaching?

12. The village teacher or preacher is often the only educated Christian in the village. What is the bearing of this upon religious education? Are effectiveness and extreme simplicity incompatible?

13. Should courses in religious education form a part of the teacher training course?

14. What do you think of the assertion that the village Sunday school should be eliminated in favour of the more continuous and educationally superior village school?

15. Has the Sunday school any unique contribution to make in worship training?

16. If the church is to be a teaching church, what is to be taught? Are these things being taught?

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CHAPTER IX

CHURCH UNION : AN IDEAL OR A FACT?

WHILE the churches in the West have been discussing church union as a noble ideal, the churches of India have been translating that ideal into action, until today widespread union of the churches is an accomplished fact.

The first movement toward church union in India arose from a suggestion made in 1863, that the various Presbyterian bodies attempt to get together. In 1865 the Northern India Synod of the American Presbyterian Church appointed a committee to further this movement and in 1871 a general conference on union was held in Allahabad. Delegates were present from the Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland, the American Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and the Reformed Church in America. Though the delegates were agreed that an all-Presbyterian union was desirable, they decided that at present it was impracticable, and suggested periodical conferences of ministers and elders for the purpose of consultation and co-operation. In 1873 an Indian Presbyterian Confederation was formed, which two years later, became the Presbyterian Alliance of India, to meet in council once every three years. The first council of the Alliance was held in 1877. In the meanwhile the desirability of organic union was being urged by some of the governing bodies at home. The Alliance, in 1889, took the first definite step to bring about such union, but the movement was

unsuccessful and it was not until 1901 that the meetings of the Alliance were resumed.

In the Presidency of Madras there were three Presbyterian missions working in close territorial relationship, viz., the Church of Scotland, the American Arcot, and the Free Church of Scotland. And yet, despite their territorial contiguity, there was for a long period little intercourse between them. The Free Presbytery of Madras in 1887 endeavoured to awaken interest in a South Indian United Church, but when the Presbyterian Alliance began to sponsor an all-India union the matter was suspended, and with the failure of the larger attempt, dropped. The resumption of the movement was encouraged by the report of the organization of a native church in South China, connected with the missions of the Presbyterian Church of England and the American Dutch Reformed Church. Hence in 1900, representatives of the American Arcot and the two Scotch missions met once more and decided that the time had come for the formation of a united church in South India on a Presbyterian basis. A sub-committee was appointed to submit a basis of union, which committee recommended that the statement of doctrine for native elders, licentiates, and ministers appointed by the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland should be adopted as the confession of faith, and the constitution and canons of the Church of Christ in Japan, with necessary modifications, as the constitution and rules of the united church. This recommendation was in turn submitted to the missions and presbyteries concerned for their approval, with the understanding that the whole should finally be remitted to the home churches for approval and sanction. The scheme was approved by the 95th regular session of the Reformed Church in America, meeting in June, 1901, and also by the

General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. The Foreign Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland withheld its approval, supposing that the union involved an amalgamation of missions, instead of the churches alone. The final consummation of the union took place at Madras on September 25, 1902.

Stimulated by this movement, the Presbyterian Alliance of India was led to resume its meetings in 1901, and in December, 1904, eight different sections of the Presbyterian Church united into one general assembly. The South Indian Synod took a full part in the negotiations, reserving to itself, however, the right to withdraw from the Presbyterian Church of India in the interests of a more practical union in Southern India.

There were two Congregational bodies working in the South India area, the London Missionary Society missions and the mission of the American Board. The missions were essentially one in thought and in spirit, the chief difference being that one group of missionaries came from one side of the Atlantic and the other group from the other. Accordingly, it was relatively easy for the churches connected with these missions to come together into one body. The movement began in September, 1901, and was consummated in July, 1905. A simple declaration of faith and constitution was drawn up and approved, and a standing committee on union was appointed to carry on the negotiations already begun with the South Indian synod of the Presbyterian Church and to extend the union to any other Christian churches.

There had been precedent in other lands for the already consummated unions, but for the proposed Presbyterian-Congregational union there was no precedent. However, it was felt strongly by the

leaders in both churches that the time was ripe for the abandonment of sectarian ruts, and to give the Indian church the encouragement of larger numbers and a broader horizon of fellowship. Accordingly, in 1905, negotiations began for the union of the Congregational and Presbyterian bodies in South India.

The attempt was made to combine the best elements of both the Congregational and Presbyterian polities. The autonomy of the local church was conserved, but provision was also made for Presbyterian care and oversight. While the General Assembly was not given the power of a Presbyterian assembly, it retained considerably more power than a Congregational council. The Confession of Faith was not as detailed as the ordinary Presbyterian confession, and yet more detailed than the ordinary Congregational confession. The whole idea was inclusion rather than exclusion.

Though the movement was missionary inaugurated and largely missionary negotiated, its underlying purpose was to strengthen the Indian Church.

The first General Assembly of the South India United Church was constituted in Madras, July 25-27, 1908; the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in India having in the preceding year given consent to its South Indian synod to take this step.

The first General Assembly of the South India United Church appointed a standing committee on federal union, and in the second assembly its powers were increased to consider the subject of organic union. In the year intervening both the chairman of the Basel German Mission and the director of the Ceylon and India General Mission made inquiry regarding this step. In 1910, the Bishop of Madras invited a small group to consult

with him regarding union between the Anglican and the South India United churches, but the time was not yet ripe. In the third meeting of the Assembly in 1911, it was voted that the Church of Scotland Mission should be accepted, heartily and unanimously, into the full meinbership of the South India United Church. In the same year negotiations were begun with the Provincial synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. These negotiations continued until 1917, when they were abandoned because the sentiment and conviction in the Wesleyan Church was opposed to such union. In 1918, the South India United Church was approached by the Presbyterian Church in India regarding the possibility of uniting to form a united church for all India. Negotiations were opened between the two bodies, but were later abandoned in the light of new developments in South India. The World War necessitated a reorganization of the Basel German Mission in Malabar, and so in 1918 the Malabar churches were received into the full membership of the South India United Church.

The movement for union between the South India United Church and the Anglican Church which began in 1910 was reborn in a conference of Indian ministers meeting at Tranquebar, May 1-2, 1919. At this time twenty-three ministers, in an informal conference, came to unanimous agreement upon the common ground of the fact of the historic episcopate and of the spiritual equality of all members of the two churches, proposing as the basis of union—(a) the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as containing all things necessary to salvation; (b) the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds; (c) the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Shortly after the Tranquebar conference the Malabar Suffragan and other members of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church also expressed their interest in union, but the internal situation of the Syrian Church was not such as to favour the continuance of negotiations.

Since the Tranquebar Conference 10 meetings have been held by the Joint Committee on Union of the Anglican and the South India United Churches, the last 6 of which have been attended by representatives of the South India Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The major points considered have been the principle of the historic episcopate in constitutional form; the election and power of bishops; the equality of the ministry; the equality of membership; the matter of inter-communion; congregational freedom of worship; and the matter of church government, particularly the question of voting by houses in the Assembly.

The two most difficult problems have proven to be the question of intercommunion and the question of the ministry. At the fourth meeting of the Joint Committee held at Pasumalai in April, 1923, a proposal was brought forward for a joint commissioning service in which the bishops and clergy of the Anglican Church should be commissioned by certain representative presbyters (ordained ministers) of the South India United Church, and the ministers of the South India United Church by a bishop and representative priests of the Anglican Church. The service was not to be regarded as a repudiation of former ministries, but rather as an act of love and fellowship looking forward to a wider ministry.

The proposal was accepted by six of the nine church councils of the South India United Church, but owing to an exceptionally crowded agenda had

not been considered by the Provincial Council of the Anglican Church at the time of the sixth session of the Joint Committee, February 24-28, 1926. The document had, however, been submitted to representative English churchmen, who were practically without exception opposed to the proposal. They felt that the service could not be regarded as conveying ordination to the priesthood, while the South India United Church representatives had not intended that it should. The Anglican delegates therefore reported at the sixth session that as far as the Anglican Church was concerned the commissioning service was dead.

For a time it appeared as if the negotiations must be suspended, but the Indian members of the committee insisted that a solution of the difficulty must be found, else they themselves would take the problem in hand and come to some settlement.

The Anglican members then held two long separate meetings resulting in a statement setting forth the historic customs or rules of the Church confining the celebration of the communion to bishops and priests, and the consecration of bishops and ordination of other clergy to bishops. There is difficulty in admitting "that ordinations otherwise made and sacraments ministered by persons otherwise ordained can be considered by us just as satisfactory, or just as free from all doubt, as those guarded by the ancient rules of the Church. We wish therefore to begin by saying that all difficulties would be removed both for us and all members of our Church if the ministers of the other uniting churches 'accept a commission through episcopal ordination' of such a sort, that it would make it certain to all that they had been ordained according to the ancient rules and were going to minister in accordance with them. The Bishops and

Clergy of the Anglican Church are willing to accept any ordination from the S.I.U.C. or the Wesleyan Church which those two bodies deem necessary.”¹

It was anticipated that this solution would be rejected by the South India United Church and Wesleyan members, and hence the Anglican committeemen issued the further statement that they were willing to urge the Church to take the view that “the existing ministers of the churches uniting with us belong to ministries which were raised up to them by God in times of difficulty, when by the fault of no living man those churches were unable to comply with the two ancient rules referred to above, and were enabled by Him to do evangelistic, prophetic, and pastoral work in which we humbly perceive His hand.”² They made it clear, however, that this method of meeting an emergency could not be considered to supersede the ancient rules of the Church.

They then proposed that in view of a union in which the uniting churches should declare as their purpose that after a period of fifty years no one will minister in the Church save he has received regular episcopal ordination, the existing ordained ministers of the uniting churches will be accepted as “ministers of the Word and Sacraments,” in the future united church, subject to the conditions that “no minister ordained before the union will minister temporarily in any church or congregation, without the consent of the parish minister and the congregation, or will be transferred to any new congregation without the consent of that congregation and the Bishop.”³

¹ *The United Church Herald*, “Report of the Sixth Session of the Joint Committee on Union,” July, 1926, pp. 62-73.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

The South India United Church and Wesleyan members of the committee were willing to accept the substance of this proposal as a basis for further conference, and it was further resolved that during the fifty years succeeding the union, ordained ministers of the churches that had established the missions at present connected with the uniting churches, might be received as ministers of the United Church provided they are willing "to make the same declarations with regard to the Faith and Constitution of the United Church as are required from persons about to be ordained or employed for the first time in the United Church." It was the expectation of the committee that at the end of the fifty year period all ministers in the United Church should have been episcopally ordained.

With regard to inter-communion the following principles were laid down—(1) that inter-communion and inter-celebration should be definitely regulated with the general consent of the authorities of the United Church; (2) that the authority of the diocese should be respected in every case; and (3) that in all actions the preservation of unity within, the attainment of wider union and the avoidance of immediate contests on particular cases should be the guiding factors.

The resolutions of the Joint Committee were referred to the three churches and although they were not acceptable in their entirety, each governing-body re-appointed its committee on union in the hope that some workable plan of action might be evolved.

At the seventh session of the Joint Committee, (Bangalore, June 29-July 4, 1928) resolutions were passed upon six major subjects. "We are agreed," said the delegates, "that the only union which

Christians should aim at is the union of all who acknowledge the name of Christ in the Universal Church, which is His body; and that the test of all local schemes of union is that they should express locally the principles of the great catholic unity of the Body of Christ. Our only desire, therefore, is so to organize the church in India that it shall give the Indian expression of the spirit, the thought, and the life of the Church Universal."¹

The Old and New Testaments, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the constitutional episcopate were confirmed as the basis of union. The bishops are to be elected, to perform their duties according to the written constitution of the United Church, and although "continuity with the historic episcopate is to be effectually maintained . . . no particular interpretation of the fact of the historic episcopate" is to be demanded. It was suggested that at the inaugural service of the United Church, ministers from the two uniting churches, and bishops from the Anglican church shall successively lay hands on the heads of the new bishops "thus conserving for the United Church the traditions held by each of the uniting bodies."²

The proposal of the fifty year time limit for non-episcopally ordained ministers was reconsidered, and in its stead it was recommended that after a period of thirty years the United Church shall itself consider and decide the question of the status of its ministry. To meet the anxiety on the part of some Anglicans that they would be compelled to take the sacraments from the hands of non-episcopally ordained ministers it was agreed that "any

¹ *South India United Church Herald*, "The Bangalore Committee on Union," September, 1928, pp. 122-26.

² *Ibid.*

congregation accustomed to an episcopally ordained ministry will not either temporarily or permanently be placed in charge of a non-episcopally ordained minister unless all the communicant members of the congregation have been informed of the suggested appointment and no one has signified his objection to such an arrangement.”¹

The committee expressed the hope that the United Church might maintain fellowship with all the various churches with which the uniting churches are now enjoying fellowship, but insisted that none of these denominational bodies should have any authority over the United Church. The most difficult problem, of course, concerned the relation of the United Church to the Church of England in India. Moreover, the new freedom of the Anglican Church in India raised certain administrative problems. The problems were discussed but were left to a continuation committee for further consideration.

With regard to intercommunion the committee agreed that no minister or lay member of the united church should forfeit any previous rights of intercommunion or intercelebration. Every effort should be made to safeguard the conscientious scruples of both ministers and laymen.

The Eighth Meeting of the Joint Committee, held in Madras, February 26-March 8, 1929, differed from the previous meetings in that for the first time a relatively complete scheme of union was in the hands of every delegate as the basis of discussion. Since the Seventh or Bangalore Session of the Joint Committee the Continuation Committee had been hard at work, and at the Madras meeting its members presented the results of their deliberation.

¹ *South India United Church Herald*, “The Bangalore Committee on Union,” September, 1928, pp. 122-26.

The Draft Scheme of Union as submitted to the Joint Committee, contained those items which had previously been agreed upon, as well as items not hitherto considered or agreed upon by the whole committee, but which in the judgment of the Continuation Committee were necessary elements in a complete scheme of union.

In the first session of the Joint Committee the entire scheme was rapidly examined, and the points noted upon which there was either complete or partial agreement, as well as those that would require more careful consideration. The committee then divided itself into four groups dealing with the government of the church, creeds and worship, the ministry, and the relation of the United Church to other churches. During the closing days of the meeting the sub-committees brought in their reports and these reports were considered by the whole body.

The *Proposed Scheme of Union* asks the uniting churches to accept "the historic episcopate in a constitutional form as part of their basis of union, without intending thereby to imply, or to express judgment on, any theory concerning episcopacy." The functions of the bishop are to be essentially the functions of the present Anglican bishops. Both the diocese and province are to have a voice in the appointment of bishops.¹

The Committee submits "that the bishops of the dioceses of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon (as the Church of England in India is now called) which are to be included in the United Church, shall be accepted as bishops of the United Church, provided that they assent to the Basis of Union and accept the Constitution of the United Church."²

¹ *Proposed Scheme of Union*, p. 4.

² *Ibid.*, p. 5.

All consecrations of bishops are to be performed by bishops, not less than three taking part in each consecration.

The committee expresses the hope, and declares it to be the intention of the United Church that eventually all permanent ministers of the church shall be episcopally ordained. For thirty years after the union "the ministers of any church whose missions have founded the originally separate parts of the United Church may be received as ministers of the United Church if they are willing to give the same assent to the Basis of Union and the same promise to accept the Constitution of the United Church as will be required from persons about to be ordained or employed for the first time in that church. After this period of thirty years, the United Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry."¹

It was decided at the Madras session that there should be a Diaconate in the United Church, thus continuing the three historic orders of the ministry —bishops, presbyters, and deacons. The problem of the diaconate was complicated because both the ordained deacons looking forward to ordination as presbyters, and the ordained ruling elders of the Presbyterian churches had to be considered. The situation was met by providing for ordained deacons —candidates for ordination as presbyters, and for lay deacons or elders, set apart for life to assist the pastor in the spiritual and administrative work of the church.

Regarding inter-communion the joint committee declares "that none of the ministers or members of

¹ *Proposed Scheme of Union*, p. 11.

the United Church shall because of the union forego any rights with regard to inter-communion and inter-celebration which they possessed before the union They recognize that the act of union will initiate a process of growing together into one life and of advance towards that complete spiritual unity. If during this process difficulties and anomalies arise, the United Church will be careful not to allow any over-riding of conscience by Church authorities or by majorities; nor will it in its administrative acts knowingly transgress the long-established traditions of any of the uniting churches." Instead of framing regulations upon the point, the Committee feels that assurances must be given and received in a "spirit of mutual confidence and love."¹

The union is to be inaugurated by the partaking of the Holy Communion. At the beginning of this service the existing bishops will declare their assent to the governing principles and constitution of the United Church. The new bishops will then be consecrated in a service of six parts—(1) the presentation of the bishops-elect to the presiding bishop; (2) intercessory prayer; (3) the public examination of the bishops-elect; (4) the consecratory prayer; (5) the laying on of hands; (6) the delivery of the Bible to the bishops being consecrated.

The matter of whether presbyters should participate in the consecration of the first bishops has long been a most perplexing problem. The recommendation of the Joint Committee is that the presiding bishop, at least two other bishops, and presbyters of the South India United Church and the Wesleyan Church shall lay on hands jointly, "with or without accompanying words."

¹ *Proposed Scheme of Union*, pp. 9-10.

The immediate establishment of exactly demarcated dioceses in an area where district synods and councils of the three uniting churches are already established could not but result in confusion, and hence it is proposed that "the new bishops appointed at the inauguration of the union should be designated for work in particular areas, but not have constitutionally established and rigidly demarcated dioceses."¹ The territorial diocese is expected to be a more or less natural growth.

The governing bodies of the church are to be the pastorate committee, the diocesan council and the synod. Upon the bishops there rests the special responsibility of preserving the faith and order of the church, and no proposition which directly concerns these subjects can be submitted to the synod for final voting save "in a form approved by the bishops sitting separately for that purpose."

The proposed United Church asserts its freedom in spiritual matters from the "direction or interposition of any civil government." It further asserts its freedom from control of any church or society external to itself. At the same time it seeks to be "in full communion with the churches of the Anglican communion, and equally to be in such relations of communion and fellowship with other churches as are now maintained with those churches by the South India United Church and the Wesleyan Church in South India."²

A most difficult problem throughout the whole negotiations has been the relation of the United Church to the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon. The southern dioceses of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, while strongly desiring to be a

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

part of the United Church, have been reluctant to give up organic connection with the northern province of the Church. Then too, under the Indian Church Act, 1927, the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon as a whole owes certain obligations to the maintained churches and their congregations, and to the chaplains. It was considered as to whether the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon might as a whole enter into the union, but the suggestion was rejected on the ground that such a union would savour of the absorption of the South India United Church and the Wesleyan Church of South India.

It is now proposed that the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon shall divide itself into a northern and southern province, in order that the southern province may enter into the United Church. For the time being there will be no organic union between the two provinces, but it is hoped that a similar union may be brought about in the north, leading ultimately to the formation of an All-India United Church. The United Church in South India, as the successor in South India to the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon is to undertake certain obligations both in respect to the maintained churches and the chaplains of the ecclesiastical establishment in South India. In order to deal with the business involved in these obligations, the United Church is to send "bishops, presbyters and laymen as representatives of its dioceses to meet the representatives of the dioceses of Northern India in an assembly which will be the General Council referred to in the Indian Church Act, 1927." The Joint Committee believes this arrangement to be in harmony with the real intention of the Indian Church Act, though it may require some slight modification of the Statutory Rules, which it is

hoped the Metropolitan will be willing to suggest to the Government of India in Council.

The United Church also proposes to provide for the continuance in military cantonments of the ministry now carried on by the Wesleyan Methodist Church—if the Wesleyan and military authorities so agree.

Other sections of the Scheme deal with church membership, worship, discipline, marriage law, property and finance.

The proposed Scheme of Union adopted by the Joint Committee was submitted to the official governing bodies of the churches concerned for suggestions and criticism. The Assembly of the South India United Church suggested certain changes regarding episcopacy, the ministry, and inter-communion, basing its suggestions upon the observation that if union is to be accomplished it "can only be done by formulating a scheme which will secure that the church will be a common spiritual home for the various schools of thought and practice in the uniting bodies on a basis of mutual toleration and respect, and not by attempting to secure uniformity."¹

The South India Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church also proposed modifications regarding episcopacy and the ministry, and suggested to the Anglican Church that it would "help greatly to increase the spirit of unity between the consulting churches, and within our own church to win the mind of our people, if, even before the union is consummated, united worship and especially inter-communion between the consulting churches can be made possible."²

¹ *Church Union—News and Views*, July, 1930, p. 14f.

² *Ibid.*, p. 16f.

The General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon refrained from making a final statement because of the nearness of the Lambeth Conference, but did issue a statement of opinion and instructions for the guidance of its delegates, and asked that the Anglican conscience might be respected just as truly as the Free Church conscience.

The Wesleyan Methodist Conference of England, after considering the Proposed Scheme of Union, expressed its profound thanks for progress thus far achieved and authorised the South India Provincial Synod to continue the union consultations.

The Lambeth Conference (1930) approved the leading principles of the proposed scheme and expressed its strong desire "that as soon as the negotiations are successfully completed, the venture should be made and the union inaugurated."¹ It also made suggestions upon certain definite points and endeavoured to answer the specific questions put to it by the Episcopal Synod of India.

The International Council of Congregationalists, meeting at Bournemouth, felt that no union could be endorsed which would lead to further exclusiveness. The Congregational churches must bear their witness to the freedom of the spirit, praying for the coming of the day "when all exclusive claims shall be renounced, and all Christian men shall be willing to say 'Grace be unto all them who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.' "²

An article in the September, 1930, issue of *Church Union News and Views*,³ discloses certain points of conflict concerning the Proposed Scheme of Union.

¹ *Church Union—News and Views*, July, 1930, pp. 65-66.

² *Ibid.*, p. 72.

³ H. Sunitra, "Are We Moving Towards an Impasse?" p. 73

The Indian Anglicans desire :

- “(1) the United Church to admit that even an unworthy minister can celebrate a valid sacrament;
- (2) that they should not be understood to have admitted ‘the equally certain validity of all ministries’;
- (3) that the rule that ‘an episcopally ordained minister is required for the Sacraiment of Holy Communion will be preserved for those congregations which have in the past been bound by that rule’;
- (4) that the United Church should adopt as early as possible the rite of confirmation;

and

- (5) that in the Holy Communion there should be deliberate consecration of the bread and wine used.

. . . . the Wesleyans desire :

- (1) that there should be a more definite and explicit statement that the Apostolic Succession shall not be a doctrine of the United Church;
- (2) that the powers of the Bishop should be clearly defined and limited;
- (3) that from time to time the Diocesan Council should express its opinion whether its Bishop is to continue in office in the diocese;
- (4) that they would not cease to recognize the validity of the ministry of non-episcopal churches;
- (5) and strongly recommend that inter-communion between the consulting churches be encouraged even before union takes place.

"The General Assembly of the South India United Church . . . recommended to its Councils that :

- (1) they do not commit themselves to the position that episcopal ordination is the dividing line between a valid and an invalid ministry;
- (2) the freedom of inter-communion and inter-celebration shall not be restricted to any section of the Church or to the lifetime of the original ministers and members, and
- (3) in framing the rules of the Diocesan Councils due consideration should be given to the views of the local churches."

The Ninth Session of the Joint Committee on Union which met in Madras, November 12-15, 1930, had before it the task of bringing such harmony out of conflicting views as would allow the scheme to go forward. As an attempt to meet the Anglican view that the unworthiness of the minister does not hinder the effect of the Sacrament, the earlier statement regarding the ministry was so amended as to read that "in ordination, God, in answer to the prayer of His Church, bestows on and assures to those whom He has called and His Church has accepted for any particular form of the ministry, a commission for it and the grace appropriate to it."¹ The original ending of the paragraph : "Which grace if humbly used will enable the ministers to perform the same," is now omitted.

To meet the Free Church desire that there should be a more definite and explicit statement that it is not the intention of the scheme that apostolic succession shall be a doctrine of the church, the section regarding the Episcopate was changed so as

¹ *Church Union—News and Views*, January, 1931, p. 136.

to make clear that the acceptance of the historic episcopate in a constitutional form "does not bind the united church to the acceptance of any particular theory concerning episcopacy, either as a qualification for the ministry, or as a determining factor in its relation with other churches."¹

The amended Scheme further states that in providing for the episcopal ordination of bishops and presbyters the Church desires to secure the unification of the ministry, "but that the acceptance of this provision does not involve the denial of the validity or regularity of any other form of the ministry."²

The implications of the Scheme in relation to communion and inter-communion are set forward as follows.

"1. *Of Communicants and Ministers in the United Church—*

(a) Any communicant member of the United Church is at liberty to communicate in any church of the United Church; and any minister of the United Church is at liberty to minister and to celebrate the Holy Communion in any church of the United Church, subject only to the terms of the pledge, *viz.*, 'that in the United Church no arrangements with regard to churches, congregations or ministers will knowingly be made . . . which would offend the conscientious convictions of any persons directly concerned, or which would hinder the development of complete unity within the Church or imperil its subsequent progress towards union with other churches.'

¹ *Church Union—News and Views*, January, 1931, p. 137.

² *Ibid.*, p. 137.

- (b) Any communicant member of any church which is in fellowship with any of the uniting churches is at liberty to communicate in any church of the United Church.
- (c) Any minister of a church with which the United Church has relations of fellowship, is at liberty to minister or to celebrate the Holy Communion in any church of the United Church, if he is invited to do so, subject to the provision of the pledge for the protection of conscientious scruples.

"2. Of Inter-communion with Other Churches—

- (a) It is understood that the fellowship which exists between the uniting churches and other churches at present is not intended to be merely temporary but is to be a permanent fellowship, leading, it is hoped, to a worldwide union of the Church.
- (b) It is expected that all the churches with which the United Church has relations of communion and fellowship will be willing to receive any communicant member of the United Church to communion as a visitor in any of their churches.
- (c) It is understood that any minister of the United Church proposing to celebrate the Holy Communion or to minister in any church of a church with which the United Church is in communion and fellowship, will be bound by the regulations of that church in regard to his ministrations, in the same way as the ministers of that church are bound."¹

¹ *Church Union—News and Views*, January, 1931, p. 143.

The Revised Scheme is prefaced by an explanatory statement reiterating the conviction that union is the will of God and that all differences must be resolved that His purpose may not be balked. While stress must be laid upon organization, the movement is essentially a spiritual one, looking forward to an increase in spiritual power for the evangelization of India.

The Scheme as adopted by the Joint Committee was forwarded to the various church bodies concerned for consideration, with a view to seeing what further revision might be desirable or necessary. The suggestions received were taken up in the Tenth Session of the Joint Committee on Union, meeting in Bangalore, June 15-18, 1932.

The most controversial matter considered at this meeting was the thirty-year time limit for non-episcopally ordained ministers. This subject brought forth spirited discussion, for members of the South India United Church "felt very strongly that the resolution as it stood was weighted against any possible fellowship with the Free Churches after the thirty-year period was over. To them it looked as though the United Church must become an exclusive church with a completely unified ministry, and they naturally feared that such a rule regarding the ministry would make it impossible to have fellowship with the Free Churches that might remain at that time. On the other hand those that believe in the rule of an episcopal ministry felt that their whole adherence to the scheme and their hope for a unified ministry rested upon this great principle of having a ministry that would be completely episcopal."

This section of the proposed Scheme was finally modified so that for the last sentence of the section,

¹ *Church Union—News and Views*, July, 1932, p. 6.

the following was substituted : "After this period of thirty years the United Church must determine for itself whether exceptions to the rule of an episcopally ordained ministry shall continue to be made or not, and if so, of what nature, giving in their consideration full weight to the fundamental principles of the union, viz., that the ministry of the United Church must be a fully unified ministry and that at the same time, full fellowship and communion must be maintained with all those branches of the Church of Christ with which the uniting churches now severally enjoy such fellowship, and that the fellowship must continually be widened and strengthened; provided that the status of those at that time already received as ministers in the United Church shall not be affected by any action which the United Church may then take."¹

A drafting committee was appointed to redraft the Basis of Union and a constitution for the United Church. Another committee was appointed to study the financial aspects of the proposed union and to investigate "the question of territorial division into diocesan areas." The Joint Committee as a whole is expected to meet again early in 1933.

The significance of this proposed union in South India is much more than local. It is believed that the union, when successfully accomplished, will give impetus to union movements in other parts of the world. It is not the intention of the negotiators to establish a new church. They rather look forward to bringing all churches into complete fellowship and organic union. It is hoped that the South India Scheme may become first of all the basis of union for other churches in India, then in other lands where missions are working, and finally

¹ *Church Union—News and Views*, July, 1932, p. 16.

in Europe and America. It is a daring vision, but a goal not impossible of achievement.

We have already noted the events leading up to the formation of the Presbyterian Church in India in 1904. During the years that followed, the new Presbyterian Church made every effort to bring into the union other churches in North India following the Presbyterian system. In 1919, the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church of Assam joined the larger body. In 1917, negotiations were begun looking toward the union of the Presbyterian Church and the Congregational churches of Western India, which union was accomplished in 1924. The Congregational churches accepted the constitution of the Presbyterian Church as the basis of union, as well as the existing Presbyterian Confession of Faith "for substance of doctrine."

At the present time negotiations are in process between the United Church of Northern India, as this union came to be known, the Methodist Episcopal Church in Southern Asia and the Baptist Missionary Society and Churches. The major problem in this union is the attempt to bring together Baptist churches having the congregational system of church government, the Methodist Church with its bishops and organic connection with world Methodism, and the United Church of Northern India—an independent church body, Presbyterian in its organization. In their essentials, however, the three churches are very close together and there should be no insurmountable obstacle to their union.

It is to be hoped that the North and South India negotiators may keep in such close touch with one another that the two unions may not be established upon irreconcilable views of the episcopacy or any other principles that might hinder the formation of a united church for the whole of India. Reasonable

precaution before union will prevent much future difficulty.

Church union in India is both an ideal and a fact. The movement is very much alive and bids fair to be of genuine significance to the whole of Christendom.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Should the basis of church union be credal?
2. Should church union aim at uniformity, or at mutual appreciation, toleration and respect?
3. Should schemes of church union be engineered by a few leaders, or should the demand arise from the church members themselves? Should education for church union take place before or after union?
4. Should missionaries take the lead in encouraging church union?
5. Is an episcopal form of church government best suited to the younger churches?
6. Does acceptance of the historic episcopate carry with it the acceptance of any particular theory concerning episcopacy?
7. Is episcopal ordination essential to a valid ministry?
8. Does episcopal ordination necessarily involve the denial of the validity or regularity of any other form of the ministry?
9. Is it possible to have a true united church when a non-episcopally ordained minister is not free to minister in those local churches of the united church that have been accustomed to an episcopally ordained ministry?
10. Is it possible to have a true united church without free inter-communion?
11. Is it fundamental that a united church should seek to maintain fellowship with all the branches of the Church of Christ with which the uniting churches previously enjoyed fellowship?

12. Church union in actual practice, is often a step in the direction of conservatism. Is complete union of the churches the highest goal, or is there also a place for independent thinking and fearless advance? Are the two incompatible?

13. Does the presence of denominational missions in united church areas make for harmony within the united church?

14. When does a *nominal* united church become a *real* united church?

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CHAPTER X

MUST THE CHURCH SERVE THE STATE?

IT is not my purpose in this chapter to give a complete history of the nationalist movement in India, or to attempt to discuss the present political situation. I am simply attempting to outline some of the major political developments in India from the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 to the arrival of Lord Willingdon as Viceroy in 1931, and to discover, if possible, some of the implications of this struggle for the Christian Church.

From a political standpoint, the opening years of the present century were electric ones. Lord Curzon was the Viceroy. An exceptionally able man, he was endowed with many gifts, but he seemed to lack the one gift which is essential to a truly great leader, viz., the gift of imagination. He felt a definite sense of mission and a definite responsibility for giving the people of India an efficient administration, but he never seemed quite able to put himself in the place of the Indian people.

The crisis came in 1905. For some time it had been recognized that Bengal was too unwieldy for the best administration. The majority of the people of Bengal, however, were closely united racially and were strongly opposed to any suggestion of division. Disdaining any attempt to win the people to his side, Lord Curzon arbitrarily divided Bengal into two equal parts. A storm of protest arose from all sides. The Conservatives began to lose their faith

in the good intentions of Government and voices began to demand the use of other than ordinary political methods to bring about the redress of grievances. The so-called Extremist Party adopted as its motto : "Self-Reliance not Mendicancy," and began a campaign of boycott and passive resistance. The breach between Government and people widened; repression was met by acts of violence; the cult of the bomb came into being; and fear and confusion walked abroad.

Recognizing the seriousness of the situation, Government in 1909 introduced the Morley-Minto Reforms. By these reforms Indians were for the first time admitted to the cabinets of the Governors, the Viceroy, and the Secretary of State. The Legislative Councils were enlarged and a certain number of seats made elective. The reforms, while not particularly far-reaching, were of value in re-establishing confidence. To the thoughtful leaders of the country they marked the beginning of a new era of understanding and co-operation. It was impossible though to stay a great movement of discontent thus easily. The radical elements had been travelling with such speed that they could not at once bring their machine under control, and acts of violence still continued.

The Great War furnished the real test of Indian loyalty. Political differences were shoved into the background and leaders of all parties rallied to the support of Government. Indian troops to the number of almost two millions responded to the call to arms and many millions of pounds were poured into the treasury for the conduct of the war. The political truce was broken by the introduction of Mrs. Besant's Home Rule Scheme, which again divided the loyalties of the people. It was then (August 20, 1917) that the Secretary of

State for India came forward with the declaration that,

The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.

Mr. Montagu himself came out to India and in consultation with Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, issued a Report on Constitutional Reforms for India, which was welcomed by many as the first stage toward the "progressive realisation of responsible government." The Reforms Scheme provided for an increase in the elective members in the Provincial Legislative Councils and for the transfer of certain administrative departments to Indian ministers. As a matter of fact, however, little real power was vested in the Councils, and a special Congress meeting in Bombay in August, 1918, declared the scheme to be both "unsatisfactory and disappointing."

Whatever of good-will was generated by the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was soon dispelled when Government published Bill No. I of 1919, the so-called Rowlatt Act. The Rowlatt Act was the attempt of Government to deal with the anarchical tendencies which had been revealing themselves in various sections of India. A large number of suspects had been arrested and it was felt by Government that it was unwise to deal with their cases in the regular open court. A more summary process was decided upon and a commission was appointed to consider the whole matter of Indian sedition. As the result of the committee report—a report which was substantiated by the report of

a special committee investigating the Bengal situation—a bill was passed giving Government power in time of emergency to arrest Indian citizens and to hold them without public trial or without privilege of legal defence.

The whole of India was aroused and Mr. Gandhi, who had supported the British cause throughout the War, now came forward to lead a national campaign of resistance against the Rowlatt Act. On February 28, 1919 he published the following pledge, which he asked his fellow-countrymen both to sign and to observe :

Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. I of 1919, and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. II of 1919, are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that in the event of these Bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a Committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit and further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property.

During the month of March, Mr. Gandhi busied himself in touring the country and explaining the meaning of his *satyagraha* programme. April 6th was set aside as a day for a complete *hartal*—a day on which all business should be suspended and the vow brought to the attention of as many people as possible. In Delhi the *hartal* was observed one week earlier. There was a clash between the protestors and those who insisted upon remaining at

work. The police were called out to restore order and opened fire, killing 8 persons. This incident served to give added impetus to the movement, and on April 6th *hartals* were observed throughout India.

On April 10th, Mr. Gandhi was stopped while on his way to Delhi and was forbidden to enter the Punjab or Delhi. The news travelled rapidly and there were riots and disorders in several centres. Mr. Gandhi was sorely troubled at the failure of his non-violence ideal and issued a statement urging his followers "to refrain at all hazard from violence."

The most serious of the various disorders occurred at Amritsar in the Punjab. The trouble arose from the act of Government in ordering the deportation of two popular political leaders. As the news spread, an angry mob gathered with the intention of approaching the Deputy Commissioner on behalf of the two leaders. The police attempted to stop the crowd but were helpless. The order to fire was given and several men were killed. The mob was now thoroughly aroused and bent upon vengeance. Three English bank officials were murdered and their bodies burned. A railway guard was killed near the railway station. A lady missionary was taken from her cycle, beaten and left for dead. There was also considerable property damage, and the whole city was in a state of confusion. Additional troops were called into the city and martial law declared. A proclamation was issued prohibiting all public meetings and stating that the order would be enforced if necessary, by arms. On the afternoon of the same day, April 13th, a large meeting assembled at the Jallianwala Bagh. General Dyer, who was in charge of the military, proceeded to the spot with a special force of armed soldiers, and without giving the crowd any warning, ordered his soldiers to fire,

which firing was continued for several minutes. About 379 people were killed and probably three times as many wounded.

The two main criticisms of General Dyer's action are that the firing was started without first giving the people a chance to disperse, and that it continued for a considerable period after the crowd had begun to disperse. The General's defence was that "It was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd, but one of producing a sufficient moral effect, from a military point of view, not only on those who were present, but more especially throughout the Punjab."

Granting the seriousness of the situation, and even recognising that the crowd has assembled in direct defiance of order, there was still not sufficient excuse for continued firing on an unarmed crowd, many members of which must have been totally ignorant of the fact that by joining the assembly they were disobeying the general's order.

The Amritsar tragedy added fresh fuel to the non-co-operation movement. Meetings of protest and condemnation were held throughout the country and in 1920 the National Congress at a special session launched a nation-wide programme of non-co-operation—a programme which was strengthened by Mr. Gandhi's expressed sympathy with the Muslims in their disappointment over the terms of the Turkish Peace Treaty.

By the terms of the treaty, as announced in 1920, the integrity of the Turkish Empire was not preserved, as Indian Muslims had been led to hope that it would be. In an open letter to the Viceroy, Mr. Gandhi stated that the Indian Muslims did not fight "to inflict punishment upon their own Khalifa or to deprive him of his territories." He claimed that a great wrong had been done them and that

he as a staunch Hindu, wishing to live on terms of close friendship with his Mussalman countrymen, would be an unworthy son of India if he did not stand by them in their hour of trial. He called upon the Hindus to show their good-will and friendship to their Mahomedan neighbours by supporting their claims and by presenting a united Hindu-Muslim front.

Although Mr. Gandhi was most sincere in his demand for justice to the Indian Muslim population, there is no question but that he also saw the increased strength which would accrue to the Indian self-government campaign through Hindu-Muslim unity. He felt that Government as a result of the Amritsar tragedy and its attitude on the Khilafat question had forfeited all claims to popular confidence, and that the only remedy for the people of India was to refuse to co-operate with Government, thereby hastening the day of Indian swaraj.

At the special session of the Congress at Calcutta in September, 1920, Mr. Gandhi succeeded in carrying his non-co-operation resolution by a vote of over 2 to 1. In this resolution the Congress advised :

- (a) The surrender of titles and honorary offices.
- (b) Refusal to attend Government functions.
- (c) Withdrawal of students from Government schools and colleges.
- (d) Boycott of British courts.
- (e) Refusal of service in Mesopotamia.
- (f) Withdrawal of candidacy to the reformed Councils, and refusal to vote for candidates offering themselves for election.
- (g) The boycott of foreign goods.

The regular session of the Congress, meeting at Nagpur in December, gave still further

endorsement to Mr. Gandhi's programme and marked a new stage in spreading the gospel of non-co-operation.

Accompanied by the Ali brothers, Mr. Gandhi toured far and wide, acquainting the people of even the remote villages with his ideal of non-co-operation. Although Mr. Gandhi himself was devoted to the creed of non-violence, he was unable to control the actions of his followers. Strikes, riots, murders and brutal outrages occurred in all sections of India.

The arrival of the Prince of Wales in Bombay in November, 1921, was the occasion of a new outbreak, resulting in the death of some fifty people and the wounding of many more. It was clear to all that something must be done. A deputation headed by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya called upon His Excellency the Viceroy asking for a Round Table Conference to discuss a basis of settlement of the difficulties between Government and the non-co-operators. The Viceroy replied that such a conference could not be considered unless the non-co-operation programme should be suspended. Mr. Gandhi was also intractable and so the suggested conference came to naught.

At the annual Congress meeting in Ahmedabad a motion for complete independence was proposed, but Mr. Gandhi strongly opposed the suggestion. It was not his desire that India should be separated from Britain if there was any other way out.

In January, 1922, a new attempt was made at mediation, but again neither Mr. Gandhi nor Government was prepared to yield. During the very negotiations Mr. Gandhi addressed an open letter to Lord Reading, threatening the inauguration of civil disobedience in Bardoli. A Government of India circular in reply to Mr. Gandhi

stated that the issue was no longer a disagreement as to methods of political progress, but rather a clearcut issue between lawlessness and the maintenance of law and order. Mr. Gandhi's further reply was that the choice before the people of India was either civil disobedience or acquiescence in the "lawless repression of the lawful activities of the people," and he proceeded with his plans for the Bardoli campaign.

Then came the news of the tragedy at Chauri-Chaura where a mob attacked the police station, burned it, and beat to death over twenty policemen. Mr. Gandhi regarded this outbreak as a warning from God to suspend civil disobedience and the Bardoli programme was abandoned. He himself engaged in a five days' fast of penance. At the meeting of the working committee in Bardoli it was decided to suspend all offensive action and to enlist the country in a programme of making hand-woven cloth, organising national schools, elevating the depressed classes, and setting up local committees for the private settlement of disputes. The plan was modified somewhat by the Congress committee at its Delhi meeting, for many of the non-co-operators were out of sympathy with Mr. Gandhi's non-violence ideal. It was, however, the programme accepted by Mr. Gandhi for his own guidance.

It had been felt for many months that it was only a matter of time until Mr. Gandhi would be arrested. The inevitable happened on the 10th of March, and in his trial Mr. Gandhi pleaded guilty to disaffection toward the Government and was sentenced to six years' simple imprisonment. The trial was conducted on a high level, the presiding judge making it very clear that he held the highest respect for Mr. Gandhi's personal character and

purity of motive. But because the mass of the people could not grasp the message of non-violence and were directing their activities into violent channels, the judge stated that it was impossible for Government to allow Mr. Gandhi to remain at liberty, and that he was therefore compelled to pass sentence.

In accordance with Mr. Gandhi's wishes, the people received the news quietly, and at the age of 53 Mr. Gandhi entered jail. During his imprisonment Mr. Gandhi's health began to give way, and after serving two years of his sentence he was released.

After his release in 1924, Mr. Gandhi devoted himself to re-establishing Hindu-Muslim unity. He was also active in propagating the idea of hand spinning, as well as giving his country moral leadership of a high order.

Between 1924 and 1927 the political situation was relatively quiet, but in 1927 the country was once more aroused by the appointment of the Simon Commission—a body charged with the task of surveying the working of the Reforms and reporting upon India's political future. Although the Commission was made up of able men, it had the fatal defect from the Indian point of view, of including no Indian members. Furthermore, the Congress Party was not willing to recognize the claim of Parliament to decide the destiny of India. The Commission's reception in India was a chilly one and despite the efforts of Sir John Simon to associate Indians in an advisory capacity, the Commission was boycotted by the majority of Indian leaders.

The Madras session of the Congress in 1927 passed a resolution calling for the assembling of an All-Parties Conference to attempt to draft a con-

stitution for India. The Conference was held at Delhi in February, adjourning to May, at which time a committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Pandit Motilal Nehru to work out a final report. The committee set to work, and in consultation with leaders from all parties prepared a document which represented the maximum measure of agreement among the parties. This document, known as the Nehru Report, sets forth Dominion Status as the goal of India, and deals with the administrative changes essential to the attainment of this goal. Though the Report was opposed by a section of the Mahomedans, who believed that their minority rights were not sufficiently protected, and by the Independence Group, it received widespread support and stimulated an unusual amount of worthwhile discussion.

At the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1928 there was a sharp debate between the advocates of complete independence and the advocates of dominion status. Under Mr. Gandhi's influence the dominion status programme won the day, Mr. Gandhi himself moving the resolution which was adopted by the Congress. The resolution welcomed the constitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee and then went on to say that "subject to the exigencies of the political situation, this Congress will adopt the constitution, if it is accepted in its entirety by the British Parliament on or before 31st December 1930, but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organize a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon."

"Consistently with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with carrying on in the

name of the Congress propaganda for complete independence."

The advent of the Labour Party to power in Great Britain occasioned widespread satisfaction in India, for it was felt that the Labour Government would be more sympathetic toward Indian aspirations than any other British political party. It was expected in India that the King in opening Parliament would make an announcement regarding the future of India, but such was not the case. The Prime Minister, however, made an announcement to the effect that since the Simon Commission was still going on with its enquiries it would not be wise to anticipate it and he appealed to Indian leaders to co-operate with his Government in an attempt to solve the Indian problem.

Lord Irwin's four months' stay in England gave rise to considerable speculation and upon his return in late October, 1929, it was expected that some authoritative word would surely be spoken. True to the expectation, the Viceroy issued a statement reporting on his consultation with His Majesty's Government. "I am authorized, on behalf of His Majesty's Government," he said, "to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status When, therefore, the Commission and the Indian Central Committee have submitted their reports, and these have been published, and when His Majesty's Government have been able, in consultation with the Government of India to consider these matters in the light of all the material then available, they will propose to invite representatives of different parties and interests in British India and representatives of the Indian

States to meet them separately or together, as circumstances may demand, for the purpose of conference and discussion in regard both to the British-Indian and the All-Indian problems. It will be their earnest hope that, by this means, it may subsequently prove possible on these grave issues to submit proposals to Parliament which may command a wide measure of general assent."

The Declaration was well received in India, but the efforts of the opposition in the British Parliament to minimise the importance of the Viceroy's statement served to confirm the extreme Congress leaders' opinion that little would ever come of the proposals. The December political meetings were accordingly of unusual interest. A section of the Congress party held the belief that the Round Table Conference would surely result in good for India, but another section held that India had had enough of promises and that the time was ripe for action, viz., for a Declaration of Complete Independence.

The Independence section triumphed, and in the 44th Indian National Congress at Lahore, Mr. Gandhi moved a resolution declaring for complete independence and complete boycott of the Central and Provincial Legislatures. The resolution called upon Congressmen "to abstain from participating directly or indirectly, in future elections, and the present members of the legislatures to tender their resignations." It called upon the nation "to concentrate its attention upon the constructive programme of the Congress, and authorized the All-India Congress Committee, whenever it deemed fit, to launch upon a programme of civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes, whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it might consider necessary."

The National Liberal Federation, meeting in Madras at the same time, welcomed the Viceroy's announcement of October 31st and declared for Dominion Status, urging "all parties in India which accept the recent announcement of the Viceroy wholeheartedly and are prepared to secure its complete and immediate realization, to combine for the purpose of securing a constitution based on Dominion Status with such safeguards and reservations as may be necessary for the period of transition."

On January 25, 1930 the Viceroy made a speech in the Legislative Assembly in which he endeavoured to make more clear what was implied in his November announcement regarding Dominion Status and the proposed Round Table Conference, and announced in reply to the Congress Independence Resolution that Government "would discharge to the full its responsibility for the maintenance of law and order, if unlawful methods were resorted to."

Mr. Gandhi's next move was to submit to the Viceroy a list of 11 reforms, which he believed could be carried out under the existing constitution, and which if taken immediately in hand would lead the Congress to "participate heartily in any Conference where there is perfect freedom of expression and demand." The list included total prohibition, reduction of the exchange ratio, reduction of the land revenue, abolition of the salt tax, reduction of military expenditure, reduction of salaries in the higher grade services, protective tariff on foreign cloth, reservation of coastal shipping, discharge of political prisoners and withdrawal of political prosecutions, abolition or public control of the Criminal Investigation Department, and issue of licenses to use fire-arms for self-defence.

The Viceroy made no move to meet the 11 demands, and so on the 6th of March, Mr. Gandhi, following his usual custom, took the further step of calling the Viceroy's attention to his proposed plans. Unless some action was taken by the 11th of the month, Mr. Gandhi said he proposed to proceed with co-workers from his Ashram to disregard the provisions of the Salt Law. The Viceroy in his brief reply of March 7th, expressed his regret at Mr. Gandhi's contemplated action, "which is clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace."

The civil disobedience campaign was at once started. On the morning of March 12th, Mr. Gandhi accompanied by his 79 chosen volunteers, began his memorable march to the village of Dandi on the Surat coast, with the avowed purpose of violating the law forbidding the production and removal of salt. As the procession marched through the villages, Mr. Gandhi exhorted the people to take to *khaddar*, to give up drinking, to refuse to co-operate with Government and to join the ranks of *satyagrahis*. On the morning of April 5th the party reached Dandi, without interference on the part of Government. The 6th of April, as the commemoration of the Jallianwala massacre, had been set as the date for the universal breaking of the salt laws. After an early morning purification ceremony, Mr. Gandhi and his volunteers marched to the sea and proceeded to break the law. Mr. Gandhi then issued a press statement calling upon the people everywhere to manufacture salt. This was the signal for acts of civil disobedience in every section of the country. Arrests followed, and by the end of the national week on April 13th, some 200 Congressmen had been arrested.

The war was on, and in every centre of size one could see an almost daily round of law breaking, lathi charges and arrests, until the jails were filled to overflowing. Despite the observance of absolute non-violence on the part of the leaders, many of the hooligan elements took advantage of the confusion to resort to acts of violence. Martial law was declared at Peshawar and Sholapur, and at Chittagong a group of revolutionaries attacked the armouries and fired the telephone exchange. Although most of the other prominent Congress leaders were in jail, Mr. Gandhi was still free, but on the 5th of May, just upon the eve of his march upon the salt works at Dharasana, he too was arrested and taken to the Yeravada jail.

Under date of May 12th, His Excellency the Viceroy issued a statement announcing that in spite of the Civil Disobedience movement, His Majesty's Government had every determination of carrying out its announced programme, and that steps were being taken to arrange for the assembling of the Round Table Conference in London in the late fall, immediately at the conclusion of the Imperial Conference. The National Liberal Federation, meeting on the 14th May, deprecated the civil disobedience movement and its consequences and called upon the Congress leaders "to restore normal conditions by the cessation of those activities which are a challenge to law and Government." It called upon Government to lose no time in publishing the terms of the Round Table Conference, "making it clear that the object of the Conference is the establishment of a Dominion Status constitution, subject to necessary safeguards for such a period of transition as may be necessary." It also urged Government "to take every step to create confidence among the people and a favourable

atmosphere to the success of the Round Table Conference by releasing political prisoners, who were not guilty of violence." The Congress Working Committee replied by expressing its abiding faith in civil disobedience, and setting forward as its programme : (1) The continuance of the civil disobedience campaign. (2) Complete boycott of foreign cloth. (3) Inauguration of a no-tax campaign. (4) Weekly breaches of the salt law. (5) Boycott of British banking, insurance, shipping and other institutions. (6) Picketing of liquor shops.

The publication of the Recommendations of the Simon Commission in late June did nothing to create a better feeling. The Report was condemned by representatives of all sections of Indian public opinion.

On July 9th, the Viceroy made his long-awaited announcement on the Round Table Conference. He re-affirmed the attainment of Dominion Status as "the natural completion of India's constitutional growth." He stated that the Conference would be "free to approach its task with its liberty unimpaired by the report of the Statutory Commission or by any other documents which will be before it The Conference will enjoy the unfettered right of examining the whole problem in all its bearings with the knowledge that its labours are of no academic kind." "I see no reason why," said the Viceroy, "from a frank discussion on all sides, a scheme might not emerge for submission to Parliament which would confound the pessimism of those who would tell us that it is impossible for Great Britain and India, or for the various interests in India, to reach an agreement."

Immediately following the Viceroy's speech, a number of leaders of liberal and moderate opinion issued a statement expressing their relief at His

Excellency's assurance "that the recommendations of the Commission will not be . . . either the last word on the subject or the necessary and inevitable basis of the reforms." "We feel very strongly," they said, "that India should participate in the Conference, and not lose or abandon this opportunity to come to satisfactory terms with the British Government."

The next move was a letter addressed to the Viceroy by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar requesting permission to interview Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru in jail to see if some basis could not be found for peace and co-operation. The request was granted, but the Congress leaders were unwilling to put further faith in British promises and so the effort failed.

On September 10th, Government named the Indian delegation to the Round Table Conference. The Congress Party was of course not represented, but the remainder of the delegation was fairly representative of Indian moderate political opinion and of the Indian Princes. The delegation sailed from Bombay under a cloud of suspicion, and was acclaimed in many quarters as traitorous. But as news of the Conference came back to India, public opinion began to undergo a change. It appeared as though England was really making an effort to understand and to meet India's point of view. Indian interest in the conference began to increase, and when the delegates returned to Bombay early in February, 1931, they received a welcome totally different from their black-flag send-off.

It was not the province of the Round Table Conference to draft a constitution for India. It was rather to lay down those principles which might

be incorporated in a constitution. The future Government of India, as outlined by the First Round Table Conference, is to be a Federal Government, embracing both the Provinces of British India and the Indian States. The Provinces are to have responsible unitary governments based upon enlarged legislatures.

The Conference delegates realized that if the scheme was to be worked out successfully it must have the co-operation of the Congress Party and so before leaving London, Mr. Sastri, Mr. Jayakar, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru cabled the Congress Working Committee asking them to postpone any decision upon the Conference scheme until their arrival in India. To this the Congress agreed, but without a suspension of the civil disobedience movement.

On the 25th of January, 1931, Lord Irwin ordered the release of Mahatma Gandhi and the other members of the Congress Working Committee and withdrew the orders declaring the Congress to be an unlawful association. The Congress leaders immediately proceeded to Allahabad for conversations, but in deference to the request of Messrs. Sastri, Jayakar and Sapru issued no public statement. Upon their arrival in Bombay, these three leaders also went to Allahabad to meet the Congress leaders and as the result of their strenuous efforts, the Viceroy invited Mr. Gandhi to a private interview. After almost two weeks of conversations, which were marked by the utmost goodwill on the part of both Mr. Gandhi and the Viceroy, an agreement was finally reached and signed on the 5th of March. It appeared several times as if the negotiations would break down, but the honest determination of both parties to bring about peace if possible, finally prevailed.

The main terms of the truce were : (1) discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement; (2) abandonment of the boycott of British goods as a political weapon; (3) release of non-violent civil disobedience prisoners; (4) permission to poor residents in the salt areas to collect and make salt for domestic consumption or local village sale; (5) recognition of the right of peaceful picketing; (6) withdrawal of the ordinances; and (7) restoration of confiscated property, except where such property had been sold to a third party. The scope of future discussions was agreed to be further consideration of the Round Table Conference conclusions, viz., federation, central responsibility, and safeguards.

Upon the signing of the truce the Congress at once called off the civil disobedience and no-tax campaign, while the Central and Local Governments took the necessary steps to carry out their part of the agreement.

The revolutionary section within the Congress Party expressed itself as dissatisfied with the settlement, a dissatisfaction which was intensified by the execution of Bhagat Singh and his two companions for the alleged murder of two police officers and other conspiracies. But at the Karachi session of the Congress, the first week in April, the various groups resolved their differences, endorsed the Delhi agreement and authorised Congress participation in the further discussions of the Round Table Conference. Mr. Gandhi was given full authority "to negotiate with Government in the name of the people."

Following the Karachi Congress, Mr. Gandhi turned his attention to an attempt to come to a solution of the communal problem, which he felt to be the greatest obstacle in the way to India's unanimous demand for freedom. But despite

numerous conferences on this troublesome subject, little headway was made.

On April 17th, Lord Willingdon arrived in Bombay as the new Viceroy and on the following day Lord Irwin sailed for England. It was generally expected that Lord Willingdon, because of his previous experience in India, would have a sympathetic attitude toward Indian aspirations, and he was heartily welcomed by a large section of Indian public opinion.

II

With the resumption of the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930, the question came to the fore : "What shall be the attitude of the Christian Church to the Nationalist Movement?" And for the individual missionary there was the similar question, "What shall be my own attitude toward the movement?" It has already been pointed out that Indian Christians are looked upon by many as denationalized and having little interest in the affairs of the nation. They are regarded as having turned their eyes from Indian culture and ideals to the West. As for missionaries, their dependence upon Government grants automatically marks them as supporters of Government. But as the national struggle got under way both Indian Christians and missionaries came to feel that there were two sides to the question, and the result was an earnest searching of hearts. The alleged police excesses against the *satyagrahis* pushed the question to the fore : "Which more nearly approximates the spirit of Christ, the force of the Christian Government or the passive resistance of the followers of Mr. Gandhi?" And the natural next question was, "What would be Jesus' own attitude were he in India today?"

The *Indian Witness*, of Lucknow, an organ of the Methodist Church, compared the civil disobedience of Mr. Gandhi and his followers with the non-violent crimes of check-forging or boot-legging and stated that its influence would always be "upon the side of law and order."¹

On the other hand, Mr. J. C. Kumarappa, an Indian Christian resident of Mr. Gandhi's ashram, directed an appeal to Christian workers and missionaries in which he stated, "Amongst Christians, there are Indians and foreigners and those who see eye to eye with the national movement and those who may honestly believe that the Nationalists are misled. But there can be no difference of opinion regarding non-violence amongst those who were enjoined by their Master to turn to 'whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek the other also' and to return good for evil. . . . Before our very eyes, Gandhiji is substituting for warfare the gospel of love in a practical way. . . . What is going to be the contribution of those who profess to follow the Prince of Peace whose banner is love? Here is an opportunity at our very door the like of which Christendom has never faced before. Do we not hear the Man of Sorrows say, 'He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me?' The choice is imminent."²

In a somewhat similar vein the Rev. W. M. Ryburn stated what he regarded to be the four basic principles of Mr. Gandhi's campaign. There is first, "an absolute loyalty to truth." Second, "there is strict adherence to methods that do not call for the use of physical force or violence on the part of those who are putting the methods into practice." Third, "there is a belief in the

¹ Quoted in the *Indian Social Reformer*, May 3, 1930.

² *Indian Social Reformer*, April 26, 1930.

power of the suffering of the innocent to reform and to redeem the world." Fourth, "there is a belief in the need of the individual for preparation and self-purification before launching out in any campaign of reforms where the weapons to be used are spiritual ones."

In regard to the question of law-breaking, Mr. Ryburn held that "if a law is morally wrong, then it can have no force with any man who knows it to be so. . . . We have in India seen, and are seeing again, an attempt to put into practice a fundamental Christian principle, the redeeming effect of non-resisting suffering, a thing that the West has never attempted to do, and even though mistakes may be made in the working out of this principle, we should be ready to thank God that someone has had the courage to make the attempt."¹

The editor of the Christian Journal *Dnyanodaya* in Western India, took the position that the missionary contribution to India is in the spiritual and not the political field. "Missionaries are not in India to shape India's political constitution but to do all that lies in their power to help in shaping individual and national character without which none of India's movements can be of nation-building or enduring value. In other words, missionaries are in India to direct India's mind and heart to Him who as the Prince of Peace holds in His hands the secret both of individual peace of heart and of national reconciliation."²

Under the date of June 13th, a group of English missionaries, for the most part connected with St. John's College, Agra, issued a statement deplored the ever-widening cleavage between Britain and India, and calling upon Government, "putting aside

¹ *Indian Social Reformer*, May 10, 1930.

² *Dnyanodaya*, May 15, 1930.

all pride, and refusing to consider whether its previous advances have been fairly understood or not, to enter upon a very bold policy of reconciliation, based on the explicit recognition of the right of India to settle her own destiny. . . . Nothing but a positive infusion of goodwill can end the mutually provocative clash of civil disobedience and repression.”¹

Perhaps the most outspoken missionary critic of British policy in India was Father Verrier Elwin of the Christa Seva Sangh Ashram. In a pamphlet entitled *Christ and Satyagraha*, Father Elwin declares that Jesus did not lead the Nationalist Party of his own day because it was not his vocation. “We all realize the fact that vocations differ, and we do not argue that because Jesus did not go into business, or become a lawyer, or write novels, we should not do these things. They simply did not come within the range of his vocation. To argue, therefore, that because Jesus did not lead a movement against Imperialism, nobody else is ever to do so, is as absurd as saying that because Jesus was unmarried, none of his followers ought ever to have wives.”²

Father Elwin cites seven circumstances in which he believes a Christian ‘‘has a perfect right in conscience to resist a Government :

(1) When a Government exists for its own advantage rather than that of the whole people; if it is a foreign government, when it allows the economic exploitation of the country it rules by the country it represents.

(2) If a Government imposes burdensome laws, or resorts to unnecessary violence to maintain its own prestige.

¹ *Indian Social Reformer*, June 21, 1930.

² *Christ and Satyagraha*, p. 15.

(3) When a Government encourages discord among its subjects through the arrogance of its officials, a censorship of information which the public has a right to know, and provocative and repressive ordinances.

(4) When a Government is clearly not for the common good : that is, if it spends more money on the army than on education; if it draws great revenues from the liquor traffic; if its administration is extravagant, and its officials overpaid, while it does little to relieve the poverty and distress of its poorer subjects.

(5) When a Government does not fulfill its purpose of ‘sociable life and fellowship,’ where it allows—at least in practice—a social cleavage between rulers and ruled, or treats its subjects with any kind of superiority or contempt.

(6) If the laws and ordinances of a Government do not have the approval of the whole people; if they fall more heavily on the poor than the rich; and if they have to be maintained by force rather than legal persuasion.

(7) These considerations are of course greatly strengthened if the Government in question is a foreign one, especially if it has lost the goodwill of the people over whom it rules.”¹

Father Elwin concludes “that there is nothing either in the teaching of Christ or in the dominant philosophical tradition of Christendom to prevent a conscientious Christian, if he feels the above conditions apply to India, from giving his whole-hearted support to the noblest ideals of Indian nationalism as expressed by Mahatma Gandhi. . . . The real conflict today is not between nations, but between principles; not between England and India,

¹ *Christ and Satyagraha*, pp. 41-42.

but between violence and non-violence; so surely it is the duty of Christians to throw their whole weight on the side of non-violence.”¹

On the eve of the First Session of the Round Table Conference some 200 missionaries of British birth working in India, issued a statement on the political situation, expressing the belief “that no settlement will be satisfactory that does not respect Indian sentiment and make for the recovery of national self-respect. . . . We therefore urge that the principle should be fully and frankly recognized that the determining factor in laying down the lines of India’s future constitution should be the wishes of the people of India. This principle is held by politicians of all schools and it is one that accords with our deepest Christian convictions. Its acceptance by the suzerain power would go far to ensure the success of the Round Table Conference.”²

A group of Bombay Indian Christians, organizing themselves into the Nationalist Christian Party, recorded their conviction that “absolute non-violent *satyagraha*—the moral equivalent of war—is in no way against the teaching of Christ and is—as it has done in the past—capable of achieving great moral victories.”³

The Council of the All-India Conference of Indian Christians, meeting at Lucknow, July 11th-13th, 1930, expressed the opinion that by using physical force and promulgating repressive ordinances, Government had simply aggravated a troublesome situation and made it more critical. “The more powerful and organized a Government is the more

¹ *Christ and Satyagraha*, p. 44.

² *Dnyanodaya*, November 13, 1930.

³ *Ibid.*, June 19, 1930.

does it stand condemned for employing methods which cannot bear the scrutiny of the highest principles of the Christian civilization."¹

The American missionary in India found himself in an unenviable situation. He was there as a guest of the British Government, and as a guest he had certain obligations to his host. Each American missionary before entering India must sign a declaration of neutrality in regard to political affairs. In normal times the signing of this declaration works little hardship, but in times of crisis very real complications arise.

The most of the American missionaries felt themselves to be in a rather delicate position. During the course of years, the missions had built up an extensive educational system, supported in large part by Government grants-in-aid. I have already pointed out some of the difficulties in this missions-government educational connection. But in a time of national crisis there is added the further difficulty that missions are practically forced into the position of defenders of the *status quo*. It is impossible to receive Government money, and at the same time maintain a free, critical attitude.

It is easy for an outsider to say, "Let missions give up Government grants." But in India the situation is more difficult. The giving up of Government grants probably means the closing of the majority of mission schools. The closing of mission schools means that thousands and thousands of young Indian children will be denied the opportunity of an education. The denial of an education to a large section of India's youth means the weakening of the nation. And so it goes. Is it better for

¹ *Indian Social Reformer*, July 26, 1980.

mission schools to throw up their hands in protest, or to continue quietly at the less spectacular task of building the foundations of the nation. Some sincere missionaries take one position. Others equally sincere, take the other. Most missionaries are not cowards, but they are honestly perplexed as to how they can serve India most effectively.

The dynamite inherent in the missions-government connection was revealed most clearly in Madura, South India, when the District Magistrate circulated the amazing statement that "it is the duty not only of every servant of Government, no matter in what department he may serve, but also of every person whatever his nationality may be, who belongs to one of those non-official organizations which are permitted by the Government to participate in any educational, medical, or other public work in India to show his disapproval of the (nationalist) movement. He is expected to take every opportunity of promoting amongst those with whom he is brought into contact by reason of the activities of the organization to which he belongs loyalty to the Government, and countering and exposing by informed talks and discussions the lies, misrepresentations, and economic fallacies that are used in support of the Congress programme. The Government expects this service to be faithfully performed and looks to you as a member of such an organization to see that effect is given to this expectation. Any advice that you may require as to the particular methods to be followed will be willingly supplied by me on application."¹

Just about the time this statement was issued in Madras, I had occasion to discuss the subject of missionary neutrality with the then-Acting

¹ Quoted by the *Christian Century*, October 22, 1930.

Governor of Bombay. In the course of our conversation His Excellency defined neutrality as being as fair to the Government as to the Nationalists. With this definition I am in hearty agreement. The American missionary must be fair, but he should refuse with all the energy that he possesses to be led into the position of being a Government propagandist. That is not neutrality. It is partisanship, pure and simple.

It is but natural that missionaries should differ upon the rightness or the wrongness of the National movement. It is not my function here to defend one position or the other. But I do raise the question whether any missionary has the right to attempt to force his own opinions upon the Indian people. Is it the function of the missionary who stands with Government to seek to curb the nationalistic aspirations of the Christian community? Is it the function of the missionary who admires Mr. Gandhi to try to convert the Christian community to the cause of nationalism?

I personally am not so much concerned with the academic question of what Jesus might do in India today, as I am with what his professed followers are actually doing. That seems to me to be the major issue which the Christian leader must really face.

One has but to turn the pages of history to see how subject people in all lands, though compelled to accept the political institutions of a foreign government have refused to accept the conqueror's religion. In the sphere of religion they have managed both to maintain their own self-respect and to defy the government. Somewhat the same situation obtains in India today. Whether missionaries take an active part in politics or not, the political situation does influence their work. We

may take it for granted that there will be no marked Christian advance until the political question is amicably settled.

A church that is to live can pursue but one course. It can serve but one Master—the Higher Conscience, which the Christians call, "The Voice of God."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is the missionary essentially a defender of the *status quo*?
2. If the acceptance of Government grants automatically links missions to Government, what should be the position of missions in respect to Government grants?
3. The American missionary is expected to be neutral in respect to Indian politics. Do you agree with the statement quoted above that all missionaries must be active supporters of Government? Is this neutrality?
4. Should a missionary seek to curb the nationalistic aspirations of the Christian community? Should he seek to further them?
5. Should national mission workers be forbidden to take an active part in the nationalist movement?
6. When the interests of nationals and Government seemingly conflict, should the missionary take sides or act as conciliator?
7. When the people of any country are themselves divided upon the national question, should a foreign missionary be an active supporter of either side?
8. Can missionaries criticise the policy of Government at one moment and accept the protection of Government at the next?
9. Should missionaries accept honours or decorations from governments?
10. Is Jesus' attitude toward politics an adequate guide for the present-day missionary?

11. It is said that the business of missions is a spiritual one. Is it possible to "preach Christ" without heeding the implications of this teaching for every-day living? Has this any bearing upon the subject of missions and politics?

12. When, if ever, is the missionary justified in taking part in political movements?

13. When can a Government be said to be Christian?

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